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REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES

Report of the

SIXTH MEETING OF THE RECOFI WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Doha, The State of Qatar, 5–8 November 2012

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
Rome, 2013

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report as approved by the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM), held in Doha, Qatar from 5 to 8 November 2012. The report was prepared by the WGFM Secretariat. Many thanks are due to the Ministry of Environment of the State of Qatar, particularly the Department of Fisheries Wealth for the support and excellent hosting of the meeting.

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ABSTRACT

This document contains the report of the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM), which was held in Doha, the State of Qatar from 5 to 8 November 2012. The WGFM addressed and made decisions on matters concerning relevant follow-up to fifth meeting of the RECOFI WGFM and to the Sixth Session of RECOFI that was held in Rome, Italy during the period from 10 to 12 May 2011. The status of the implementation of the fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting in recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1 that entered into force on 1 January 2012 was discussed. The report on the RECOFI Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI Region as well as the progress on the work of the Task Group for this activity was presented and discussed. The development of regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management was outlined. The main outcomes of the Near East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and its relevance to RECOFI were presented. RECOFI participation in the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting and national inventories of fisheries in RECOFI Members were considered. The status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved Working Group on Fisheries Management workplan was discussed, as well as the priorities, and further to this, an update of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2013–2014 was agreed. Finally, an update on the outcomes of the tripartite initiative on fisheries management cooperation in the northern area of RECOFI was presented. The next meeting of the WGFM will possibly be held in Kuwait in 2013.

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OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The sixth meeting of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) was held at the Lexington-Gloria Hotel in Doha, the State of Qatar, from 5 to 8 November 2012. The meeting was convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and RECOFI. The meeting was attended by 15 delegates from six members of the Commission. A list of delegates is attached as Appendix B.

2. On behalf of His Excellency the Minister for Environment, Sheikh Faleh bin Nasser Al Thani, Director General of Agricultural Research and Development, Ministry of Environment, Doha, Qatar, called the meeting to order. He expressed his pleasure at hosting this forum, and pointed out that in response to past recommendations in RECOFI workshops and sessions, Qatar has begun to implement a number of research projects. It is hoped that these efforts contribute to attaining sustainable fisheries management for the RECOFI region, noting the importance of living marine resources for future generations. His Excellency wished meeting participants a pleasant stay in Qatar and to have a fruitful discussion in the coming days. His statement is in Appendix D.

3. Mr Piero Mannini, Secretary of RECOFI and Senior Fishery Officer, FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa, Cairo, Egypt, made a statement on behalf of Mr Abdessalam Ould Ahmed, Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa, FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa, Cairo, Egypt. Mr Ould Ahmed's statement is in Appendix E. He stated that it is generally acknowledged that the greatest difficulties are encountered in the management of internationally shared fishery resources. He recalled that the sound management and development of the regional fisheries wealth require regional and subregional cooperation for fisheries and environmental research. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place on 20–22 June 2012. The Conference pointed out that at the regional scale, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) such as RECOFI are mechanisms through which states and organizations work together towards the conservation, management and sustainable development of fisheries and related issues.

4. The Chairperson, Mr Abdul Karim H. Al-Radhi, Head, Fisheries Assessment Section, General Directorate for the Protection of Marine Resources, Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, welcomed the participants to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING

5. The Chairperson invited Mr Matthew Camilleri, Fishery Liaison Officer, FAO, Rome, Italy, to introduce the draft agenda on the basis of document WGFM6/2012/1. He went on to recall the procedures for the election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson adopted by the WGFM at its second meeting (Cairo, Egypt, 27–30 October 2008) and drew the attention of the participants to the issue that a new election for a Chairperson was due to take place during this meeting. He also informed the WGFM that a Vice-Chairperson was to be elected at the meeting

and that the incumbent would assume the position of Chairperson after two years, in line with the adopted procedures.

6. The Secretary of RECOFI proposed that the issue of improving communication during the inter-sessional period should be discussed under agenda item 11 and that an additional agenda item be added for the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

7. The Agenda, attached as Appendix A, was adopted. The list of documents for the meeting is attached as Appendix C.

8. The WGFM was reminded that agenda item 5 was originally intended to be its own activity to be implemented as a workshop and that subsequently has been combined to comprise a part of this sixth meeting of the WGFM.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FISHERIES MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATION ON MINIMUM DATA REPORTING (RECOFI/6/2011/1) THAT ENTERED INTO FORCE ON 1 JANUARY 2012

9. Ms Sachiko Tsuji, Senior Fishery Statistician, FAO, Rome, Italy, presented document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/2. It is attached in Appendix F.

10. The Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1, entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" was adopted by RECOFI at its Sixth Session (Rome, Italy, 10–12 May 2011) and, in accordance with Article V of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Regional Commission for Fisheries, formally entered into force on 1 January 2012. The Secretariat reported that the first round of data submission based on the Recommendation mainly focused on catch and effort data separated by fishing gears, specifically for shrimp trawls, wire-traps, gillnets and hook-and-lines. The Kingdom of Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Sultanate of Oman and State of Qatar submitted the 2011 data using the format agreed during the preparation phase and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided historical catch and effort information from the 1990s onwards. The delegate from the Sultanate of Oman assured the WGFM of its intention to provide its historical data, likely in early 2013. The delegate from the State of Kuwait indicated that the data in accordance with the Recommendation was already prepared and waiting for final authorization for submission. The delegate from the State of Qatar reported that its national data collection system had been replaced with a new, more sophisticated system, which allowed for the reflection of catch and effort to be separated by 52 species by gears and by boat categories. The delegate from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) explained that the renovation of its data collection system would be completed in 2013 and that it would become possible to comply with the Recommendation.

11. Although the timing of data submission was slightly delayed from the agreed due date of 31 August for this first round, the existing submitted data was determined to be adequate and workable. The WGFM noted the difficulty in collecting data on discards, but was aware of the need to assess them in addition to by-catch, particularly in the case of shrimp trawls and their impact on the ecosystem in the region. The WGFM agreed to keep the submission of data on discards as voluntary.

12. The Secretariat reported that no progress had been made regarding the development of a common database and information network since the fifth meeting of the Working Group. While such a mechanism would be essential in sharing information among members in a transparent and easily accessible manner, the meeting considered it less urgent than ensuring a full compilation of the data and information in accordance with the Recommendation. The WGFM was informed that FAO could provide limited assistance in a similar way to the currently FAO supported RECOFI web page, which includes the RECOFI document archive, as a temporary solution. This raised the issue on how to fund the regular tasks and activities that would require support for the implementation of the recommendations and management initiatives in the RECOFI. The WGFM also noted the benefit of Arabic translations for key documents.

REPORT ON THE RECOFI WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF FISHERIES IN THE RECOFI REGION

13. Ms Lori Curtis, Fisheries Consultant, FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa, Cairo, Egypt, presented document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/3. It is appended as Appendix G.

14. The WGFM was reminded of the purpose of the Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI region held from 22 to 24 April 2012 in Manama, the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as the discussions, conclusions and recommendations. The WGFM recognized that there is a need and purpose for this socio-economic work and agreed on the merit for including the consideration of the social and economic aspects related to management decisions based on considerations of the state of the fishery resources. The WGFM noted the need to integrate socio-economic information and data collection within fisheries data collection frameworks to better inform management approaches and decisions.

15. Mr Nasser Al-Saffar, Senior Specialist, Directorate of Fisheries Resources, Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, and Task Group Coordinator for the Task Group to Address the Socio-economic Dimension of Fisheries in RECOFI, presented the work of the Task Group since the conclusion of the workshop. The socio-economic questionnaire that had been introduced at the workshop and further developed and modified by the Task Group is included in Appendix H showing the case of the Bahrain as a first example for the region. The WGFM acknowledged the contribution of Bahrain and noted the good progress in the development of this questionnaire, and highlighted that additional information related to the demographics and social questions need to be included to better understand the context of fishermen (age, education, income etc.). The WGFM noted the importance of the role of subsidies in the RECOFI fisheries sector and that this dimension should accordingly be incorporated into the continued development of this work.

16. The good work of the Task Group was noted and the further progress of this work was encouraged by the WGFM. The WGFM recognized the need to continue to develop the questionnaire and for member countries to compile it and report to the Task Group Coordinator, and for the Task Group to continue in the development of a regional work plan, taking into consideration the comments made and the ongoing work in individual member countries.

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS WITH AGREED OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

17. Ms Sachiko Tsuji, presented this agenda item and facilitated the discussion. This agenda item was a substitute of the planned workshop to develop regional management plans with agreed operational objectives and conservation measures for fisheries management that was agreed but could not be realized before this time due to the constraints relating to resources and other organizational arrangement.

18. A brief summary was presented of the concept and process of ecosystem approach to fishery management and the meeting was reminded that the Regional Workshop on Stock Indicators and Stock Status Reporting held in Iran (Islamic Republic of) in 2009 identified three broad objectives relating to fishery resources sustainability as follows:

1) Minimising the negative impacts of shrimp trawling
2) Maintaining stocks of coastal finfish at sustainable, healthy levels with grouper and emperor snapper as potential indicator species
3) Maintaining the stock of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus commerson*) at a sustainable healthy level

19. The WGFM considered that the outcome of the workshop on social and economic aspects of small-scale fisheries held in Bahrain in 2012 and its follow-up activities would be the basis for establishing broad objectives to address the human dimension to be included in the scope of ecosystem approach of fisheries management in the region.

20. The Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1, entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" was established to support the development and implementation of the ecosystem approach of fisheries management and came into effect 1 January 2012. Data accumulated according to the Recommendation provided an opportunity for evaluation of the three broad objectives identified and for developing more concrete operational objectives and corresponding management plans. Preliminary analysis on the current status of the fisheries resources in the region was presented using the data submitted based on the Recommendation (Appendix I). Overall catch trends, the relative occurrence of target species group in the catch and CPUE trends were examined for shrimps, groupers, emperors, and coastal finfish resources. CPUE analysis was limited to those fisheries where relatively long time-series is available, mainly for those provided by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

21. The analysis indicated that the coastal finfish resources as a whole, not only groupers and emperors that are considered more sensitive to fishing pressure due to their biological characteristics, are under high fishing pressure, and are probably already in over-exploited conditions. In the case of groupers and emperors, their stock condition was considered to have fallen to levels that require immediate remedial action. On the other hand, the analysis did not identify any indications of declining shrimp stocks, regardless of the continuous increase of fishing effort of the shrimp trawl fishery.

22. The WGFM noted that the results of preliminary analysis agreed with recent scientific research suggesting a decline in most of the key commercial species in the Gulf, in particular stocks of groupers, emperors and snappers. Particularly, it was noted that the maximum rate of decline suggested by the analysis for groupers and emperors, approximately a 70 percent decline of the commercial CPUE over seven years, is consistent with the results obtained from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) demersal fish survey that showed a 90 percent decline between 1978 and the early 2000s.[1]

23. The WGFM emphasized that the potential impacts of shrimp trawling on coastal finfish resources is a persistent and serious concern due to the large quantity of by-catch and discards, composed mainly of juveniles of finfish resources, as well as possible physical destruction of habitat of nursery area for finfish resources. Despite the ceiling and reduction of shrimp trawling generally being accepted as a priority need of fishery management in the region for a long time, the meeting recognized with concern that the actual effort of the shrimp trawl fishery indicates a substantial and continuous increase. Fishing capacity was generally considered to have reached a level far beyond optimal, indicating that fishers cannot operate at full capacity with regards to economic viability.

24. Accordingly, the WGFM agreed that better control to prevent further expansion of fishing effort in general, and particularly of the shrimp trawl fishery, should be the first priority urgently requiring actions, and accepted this priority as an operational objective. Consequently, the meeting discussed the appropriate management plans to address this operational objective. In addition, the meeting noted the special importance of the management of the narrow-barred Spanish mackerel stock in the region and current efforts by GCC countries to develop an agreed management plan. The WGFM concurred on the critical need to apply commonly agreed management measures throughout the Gulf and agreed this should be discussed at the seventh session of RECOFI (14–16 May 2013). For this purpose, the WGFM recommended that GCC countries submit a specific proposal for the regional management plan of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel for the consideration by the Commission at its seventh session, including a proposal on closed fishing season and minimum capture size with suitable supporting evidence.

25. The WGFM agreed and advised the following actions together with monitoring indicators of implementation:

1) No new fishing licences should be issued and steps should be taken to reduce the total number of licences, in a way agreeable by fishing communities and taking advantage of fishers who want to retire and retiring older vessels in order to reduce licenses. The implementation should be monitored with the actual number of fishing licenses issued for individual fisheries that should be reported by members.
2) Fishing effort of individual fisheries, and particularly of shrimp trawling, should be reduced by the means most appropriate for each member and fisheries (e.g. limiting number of trips each month, limiting gear quantities or type, appropriate closed seasons). The implementation should be monitored considering the actual extent of fishing effort that will be reported according to the Recommendation on minimum data reporting.

[1] Fishery statistics for the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf 2006–2009. Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States. Secretariat. 2012. 78 pages. (Arabic).

3) Integrated region-wide management measures should be established for the management and conservation of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, taking into account the current work and its results obtained by GCC countries. These measures should be discussed and coordinated at the regional level through RECOFI. The Secretariat should monitor and report on the progress to the WGFM.
4) Each member should ensure all existing regulations and management measures are effectively implemented, and should take remedial steps when identifying difficulties in applying regulations and measures, problems in effectiveness of measures, or significant gaps and weaknesses. Each member should report the progress in implementation of this action at the annual meeting of the WGFM, including a list of national regulation and measures, general overview on implementation status, specific problems identified and actions taken.

26. The WGFM recognized the outcome of discussion under this agenda item as being an initial step toward developing a comprehensive regional management framework that would cover both resources management and social and economic aspects. It also noted that when additional and more comprehensive information would become available, this would help to elaborate more concrete and effective management plan and adjust the pre-defined management plan to fit better the actual and more recent conditions. Recognizing the dynamic nature of the process, the WGFM considered it important to act on the urgent issues without waiting for the finalization of the full regional management framework.

FIFTH MEETING OF THE RECOFI WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Summary of main outcomes

27. The Secretary of RECOFI introduced document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/5. It is appended as Appendix J.

28. The Secretary reviewed the main outcomes and decisions of the WGFM at its fifth meeting that was held in Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of) from 9 to 12 October 2011. It was noted that the WGFM has addressed a substantive list of issues related to the sustainable management of fisheries in the RECOFI region including the socio-economics of the fisheries in the region; the development of regional management plans with agreed operational objectives and related indicators; and the stock assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel.

29. The fifth meeting of the WGFM had also debated the status and extent of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the region; the establishment of a multidisciplinary scientific expert group; the cooperation with Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS); and the need to revise and update the list of key species supporting fisheries of common interest in the RECOFI area.

30. The WGFM noted that although many decisions had been followed-up during the intersessional period, others could not be implemented either due to lack of action by the members or insufficient funds. The Secretariat advised the WGFM that the inadequacy of the Commission's budget was increasingly becoming a major concern and constraint.

31. The WGFM reviewed the list of key species supporting fisheries of common interest in the RECOFI area and amended it to include *Penaeus semisulcatus* and *Euthynnus affinis*. The updated list of RECOFI priority species is given below.

32. List of key species supporting main reference fisheries in the RECOFI Area

FAO name	ASFIS code	Common name	Scientific name
Green Tiger Prawn	TIP	Green Tiger Prawn	*Penaeus semisulcatus*
Blue swimming crabs	SCD	Blue swimming crab	*Portunus pelagicus*
Pharaoh cuttlefish	IAH	Cuttlefish	*Sepia pharaonis*
Stolephorus anchovies	STO	Anchovies	*Stolephorus* spp.
Indian oil sardine	IOS	Indian oil sardine	*Sardinella longiceps*
Bludger	NGY	Jacks	*Carangoide gymnostethus*
Golden trevally	GLT	Golden trevally	*Gnathanodon speciosus*
Indian mackerel	RAG	Indian mackerel	*Rastrelliger Kanagurta*
Snubnose emperor	LBW	Orange finned emperor	*Lethrinus borbonicus*
Pink ear emperor	LTS	Redspot emperor	*Lethrinus lentjan*
Spangled emperor	LHN	Spangled emperor	*Lethrinus nebulosus*
Coral hind	CFI	Coral grouper/Bluespotted grouper	*Cephalopholis miniata*
Orange-spotted grouper	ENI	Orange-spotted grouper	*Epinephelus coioides*
White-spotted spinefoot	SCN	Rabbitfish	*Siganus canaliculatus*
Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	COM	King mackerel/Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	*Scomberomorus commerson*
Longtail tuna	LOT	Longtail tuna	*Thunnus tonggol*
Kawakawa	KAW	Kawakawa	*Euthynnus affinis*
Requiem sharks nei	RSK	Sharks	Carcharhinidae

Status of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in RECOFI fisheries, information based on a questionnaire developed by the Sultanate of Oman (paragraph 36 of the report of the meeting)

33. The delegate from the Sultanate of Oman informed the meeting that the survey questionnaire on the status of IUU fishing in RECOFI member countries could not be prepared in time for the current WGFM and that once completed the proposed questionnaire would be sent to the Secretariat for further circulation among the members. The WGFM thankfully acknowledged the continued collaboration of the Sultanate of Oman on this important issue.

34. The delegates from the Sultanate of Oman informed the meeting that a report was being prepared for the WGFM on the status of IUU fishing in their country.

35. Mr Camilleri, delivered a presentation on the problem of IUU fishing globally and the 2009 FAO Agreement on port State measures (PSMA) which is considered as a potent and effective tool to combat IUU fishing. He recalled the basic elements of a sound fisheries management process in line with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and underscored the impact of IUU fishing which undermines efforts aimed at achieving sustainable fisheries. He gave an overview of the role of RFMOs in the implementation of the PSMA as specified in the Agreement itself. He finally made reference to the priorities and proposed actions, in relation to IUU fishing issues, which were drawn up by the RECOFI regional workshop to combat IUU fishing held in 2009.

36. The WGFM understood that there was merit in proposing to the Commission to step up actions to address and develop regional plans to combat IUU fishing, on the basis of the outputs of the 2009 RECOFI workshop, the results of the questionnaire on IUU fishing, and considering the relevant provisions of international instruments such as the International Plan of Action (IPOA)-IUU and PSMA.

Consideration of terms of reference for a RECOFI multidisciplinary scientific expert group (paragraph 57 of the report of the meeting, submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran)

37. The Secretariat referred to the establishment of a multidisciplinary scientific expert group for which Iran had volunteered to draft Terms of Reference that had been provided to the Secretariat and distributed at the meeting.

38. The WGFM appreciated the document as an initial contribution to formulate the Terms of Reference and took note of the technical issues highlighted in the document including the issues of fisheries exploiting shared stock as central aspects of RECOFI action. It was felt however that additional work would be needed to develop more detailed Terms of Reference.

39. Concerning the convenience to establish a multidisciplinary scientific expert group the WGFM expressed the unanimous opinion that in the current phase of RECOFI there was no need to create an additional advisory entity, the functioning of which would require additional human and financial resources that at the moment are not available. The participants considered the current WGFM and Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA) as adequate mechanisms to address most of the scientific issues to be dealt with by the Commission.

40. The WGFM noted with satisfaction that an increasing number of members had volunteered to undertake specific tasks and follow-up actions. The WGFM remarked on the importance of members to be pro-active in order to make progress on the many issues and concerns that the Commission must address. The Secretariat encouraged the WGFM to promote such an attitude, which would be highly beneficial for the RECOFI community.

RECOFI participation in the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting (Rome, December 2011) and national inventories of fisheries in RECOFI Members (paragraph 75 of the report of the meeting)

41. Mr Marc Taconet, Senior Fisheries Information Officer and the FIRMS Secretary, FAO, Rome, Italy, presented document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/8 and facilitated the ensuing discussion. It is attached in Appendix K.

42. The purpose and nature of FIRMS was briefly recalled, and the progress since the first presentation of FIRMS at the sixth session of RECOFI in May 2011 was described. Upon questions of delegates, the FIRMS Secretary also clarified which benefits might be expected from regional fisheries management organizations as RECOFI and their member states by being FIRMS partners. The WGFM proceeded discussing the review, decision-making and recommendation issues.

43. RECOFI participation to FIRMS Steering Committee meeting – The Chairperson reported that upon invitation from FAO, he, together with Mr Tooraj Valinassab from Iran (Islamic Republic of) in the capacity of RECOFI representatives, attended the seventh FIRMS Steering Committee meeting (Rome, December 2011). They presented draft inventories of fisheries for both Bahrain and Iran (Islamic Republic of). The Chairperson expressed his opinion that FIRMS will be useful both at national and regional levels.

44. Progress review on RECOFI fisheries inventories – Using the Bahrain and Iran (Islamic Republic of) inventories examples, the FIRMS Secretary explained the process followed between the initial 3-D diagrams developed at the Cairo workshop and the fisheries fact sheets now available in the confidential area of the FIRMS system. This provided an opportunity for the WGFM to address a number of questions and issues related to the harmonization at regional level:

- The lack of agreement on a consistent meaning of "coastal/non-coastal" terminology among countries can be overcome by referring, in the fishery titles, to national criteria such as bathymetric ranges, or distance intervals from the shore.
- The WGFM reiterated that at the RECOFI level, the terminology "Gulf" has to be used for naming fisheries which take place within statistical water area 51.2
- Proper descriptions of "national/local" fishing gears and fishing vessels concerned in each fishery should be provided, while ensuring their "mapping" with regionally agreed types (e.g. Skiffs, Dhows, etc.)

It was also noted that the Oman inventory of fisheries was available in draft form at the meeting.

45. Decision on the publishing of the RECOFI fisheries inventory in FIRMS – The WGFM agreed that the consolidated inventory of RECOFI fisheries should be a comprehensive one for being published in FIRMS. The seventh RECOFI Session will consider progress and eventually decide on its formal endorsement and publishing. Oman and Saudi Arabia already indicated their capacity to deliver their inventory within few weeks. In order to ensure progress, a list of national focal points for conducting this work has been set-up, as documented in Appendix L. The progressively consolidated regional inventory will be made available by the FIRMS Secretariat to the national focal points for peer review purpose. The WGFM Chair will report the result of this peer review exercise to the Commission.

46. Progress review on RECOFI Marine resources inventory – The WGFM ranked this task a second level priority, and little progress could actually be noted with only Qatar having sent an update to the FIRMS Secretariat. Towards the goal of developing a regional inventory, it was agreed that the process should start through national contributions, with a focus on the list of RECOFI priority species. The national contributions will list resources or stocks units, mentioning for each unit whether they are regarded as shared or national only, and providing bibliographic references in support to the definition of the resource units and their assessed status.

47. Review of the proposed statistical boundary between new candidate divisions 51.3.1 (Oman Sea) and 51.3.2 (Arabian Sea (South Western)) – the WGFM acknowledged that this proposal was made in close consultation between Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Oman to

address the FIRMS requirement to distinctly geo-reference fisheries taking place in the Oman Sea and in the Arabian sea. The Coordinating Working Party on Fisheries Statistics (CWP) Secretary advised RECOFI delegates that RECOFI has the capacity to make such modifications, and that the proposed statistical boundary should also allow for consistent reporting of fishery statistics according to newly created divisions. The proposed names have also to be carefully reviewed before endorsement. The WGFM advised that Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Oman will consult each other on this matter and confirm to RECOFI. The WGFM proposed that the formal decision would then have to be made by the Commission at its next meeting.

48. Recommendation from WGFM regarding RECOFI membership as full-fledged FIRMS partner – delegates of member countries will report to the relevant authorities in order for the Commission to be able to decide regarding a formal membership of RECOFI in FIRMS. It was agreed that if funds allow, the attendance of a RECOFI representative at the next FIRMS Steering Committee (February 2013) will constitute a milestone towards this decision.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE NEAR-EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON SECURING SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

49. The Secretary of RECOFI introduced document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/9. It is attached in Appendix M.

50. The Near East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fishing and Social Development was held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, from 26–28 March 2012. The workshop was convened to allow for the sharing of policies and practices in support of small-scale fisheries in the region and thereby contribute to the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines[2], currently under development. The workshop considered issues on the topics of governance and access to resources; resource management and stewardship; social and economic development and achieving equity and equality; disaster risk management and climate change; and policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration.

51. The WGFM was invited to provide guidance on further regional and national consultations, and advise on the modalities of engagement by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), as well as to recommend how to facilitate future implementation of the guidelines.

52. The WGFM noted the challenges faced by not having a clear definition of small-scale fisheries, including the difficulty in addressing the problems and challenges of small-scale fisheries. The WGFM noted that caution should be exercised when working with the small-scale fishery so that the objective is not to upgrade this traditional fishery in terms of increasing fishing effort, that sustainability must remain a consideration, and that member countries can focus on the social and economic situation of these small-scale or traditional fisheries in the framework of a sustainable fisheries.

[2] www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/guidelines/en

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF RECOFI'S FINANCIAL SITUATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE APPROVED WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT WORKPLAN

53. The Secretary of RECOFI presented document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/10. It is attached in Appendix N.

54. The WGFM was informed on the status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved work plan of the WGFM. The issues of a technical review, which were discussed and endorsed by RECOFI at its sixth session held in Rome, 10–12 May 2011, were presented, including that the Commission was heavily reliant on FAO services, that members lacked the financial and human resources to maximize benefits, there were weaknesses in raising financial resources to support RECOFI's activities, and a new vision was required to guide the Commission.

55. The WGFM was reminded of the decision by the Commission to increase annual members' contributions to USD15 000, provided that current and outstanding contributions were settled not later than 31 December 2011. The RECOFI Secretary noted that regrettably, as reported in February 2012, this did not happen.

56. The Secretary of RECOFI noted that the current situation of the financial status of the Commission as of August 2012 was approximately USD16 000 including commitments and forecasted expenses up to the seventh session of RECOFI in May 2013. The WGFM was also informed that due to inadequate funding, the organization of the RECOFI Workshop on "Spatial Planning Development Programme for Marine Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture" and regional workshop on "Bycatch Management and Low Impact Fishing" (Kuwait, 9–12 December 2012) was only possible due to additional resources that the Secretariat succeeded to obtain from the FAO Regular Programme Funds.

57. The Secretary of RECOFI invited national focal points to convey the message to relevant authorities on how to consolidate the future work of the WGFM, given the current circumstances. The WGFM was reminded that if member countries would agree to move forward in raising their annual contribution, the RECOFI Secretariat could then act in accordance with this concurrence. The WGFM noted that without an increase in the contribution of member countries, activities in the WGFM work plan will be drastically reduced, undermining the efforts and progress made so far.

58. The WGFM unanimously agreed that the current RECOFI Chairperson, in collaboration with the Secretary, should inform the member countries of the critical financial condition of the Commission and advise the members to urgently address this salient issue, also in consideration of the growing performance of the Commission during the last years.

59. The Secretary of RECOFI reminded the WGFM of the importance of the attendance of all members at the upcoming Seventh Session of RECOFI, May 2013 in the Islamic Republic of Iran, given the above issues that need to be considered.

UPDATE OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2013–2014 IN RELATION TO THE WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

60. Mr Camilleri introduced document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/11. It is attached in Appendix O. He gave an overview of the status of implementation of projects agreed by the sixth session of RECOFI and invited the participants to consider any follow up actions in relation to the respective outputs. He also recalled the RECOFI strategy and prioritized regional activities for fisheries management and called upon the meeting to review and update them, as appropriate. Mr Camilleri added that the programme of work for the next biennium should be based on the priorities identified by the WGFM whilst considering the limited funds available to RECOFI.

61. The WGFM re-evaluated the priority of regional projects linked to the RECOFI prioritized objectives as reproduced in Appendix P. In addition, the meeting agreed to follow up on the development of the "Regional spatial planning programme for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture" (Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, 25–27 November 2012) with a capacity-development programme at both national and regional levels. Furthermore, the participants concurred on the inclusion of activities in the programme of work related to the follow-up and monitoring of a regional fisheries management framework, a joint stock assessment exercise for narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, the development of a regional programme to address IUU fishing on the basis if the outcome of the FAO/RECOFI workshop on IUU fishing that was held in the Sultanate of Oman in 2009, as well as the development of a monitoring programme for socio-economic parameters for use in fisheries management. The programme of work for the 2013–2014 intersessional period was agreed as detailed in Table 1, summarizing the details relating to the regional projects including their anticipated cost.

Table 1 – RECOFI regional projects to be undertaken in the 2013–2014 intersessional period

Working Group	Regional projects	Date	Location	Duration (days)	Indicative RECOFI cost (USD)	Status (priority approved by RECOFI)
WGFM	Follow-up and monitoring of a regional fisheries management framework				15 000	Approved by WGFM as high priority
WGFM	Development of a regional programme to address IUU fishing on the basis if the outcome of the FAO/RECOFI workshop on IUU fishing that was held in the Sultanate of Oman in 2009				20 000	Approved by WGFM as high priority
WGFM	Development of a monitoring programme for socio-economic parameters for use in fisheries management (follow-up to the outcome of the socio-economic workshop held in Bahrain in 2012)				20 000	Approved by WGFM as high priority
WGFM	Pilot joint assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and workshop on the utilization of fishery-dependent data	Feb 2013	Muscat, Oman	4	30 000	Approved by WGFM as high priority
WGFM	A study to evaluate and promote options to improve utilization of bycatch				15 000	Approved by WGFM as high/medium priority
WGFM	Applied training programme for fish data collectors for the identification of priority species				25 000	Approved by WGFM as high/medium priority

REVIEW OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE TRIPARTITE INITIATIVE ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COOPERATION IN THE NORTHERN AREA OF RECOFI AND PROGRESS

62. The Secretary of RECOFI presented document RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/12. It is attached in Appendix Q.

63. The WGFM was informed on the progress made on the FAO/RECOFI cooperative project known as the Initiative on Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of RECOFI, formulated with components of capacity development, joint appraisal of shared stocks of common interest, and the improvement of sub-regional fisheries management including combating IUU fishing. The RECOFI Secretary highlighted the coordination among the concerned countries (Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Kuwait), the project field formulation, and the recent project proposal validation meeting held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, 16 and 17 October 2012.

64. The WGFM noted the expeditious and progressive development of the Tripartite Initiative progress and highlighted that this project was conceived and initiated in the framework of RECOFI, noting the added value of this Commission.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

65. Mr David Currie, Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer, FAO Sub-regional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries and Yemen, presented an overview of the FAO technical cooperation project "Support to capacity development for fishery stock assessment in GCC countries and Yemen"(TCP/SNG/3402) which was recently formulated and approved and will run through to February 2014. The aim of the project is to create a network of young national officers with expertise in performing fisheries stock assessments. The inception workshop is planned for early 2013. It is important that suitable candidates be proposed who can benefit fully from this capacity building opportunity and who will continue to work in fisheries stock assessment in the coming years. The WGFM was reminded that this project originated from a recurrent concern and request expressed in the framework of RECOFI activities.

66. The Secretary of RECOFI drew attention to the outcome of a side meeting held by the Secretariat with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, on the matter of extra budgetary funds previously committed for a project on policy and legal framework for aquaculture development, and subsequently used for other activities included in the approved programme of work of the Commission. It was agreed that the Secretary will officially inform the concerned national focal points of the current status of the issue.

67. The matter of communication was raised by the Secretary of RECOFI, noting the challenges experienced in the past on this matter, particularly with regards to invitation to meetings and workshops. The RECOFI National Focal Points were encouraged to actively play the role to support the Commission at the country level, maximizing the benefit for whole RECOFI community. It was recommended by the WGFM to include, when possible, a cover note in Arabic for the Arabic speaking members in order to facilitate the prompt reaction of the relevant authorities.

ELECTION OF CHAIPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

68. The Chairperson requested nominations for a Chairperson for the upcoming biennium. The WGFM unanimously insisted to continue benefitting from the support and competency of the current chairperson, Mr Abdul Karim H. Al-Radhi, until the seventh meeting of the WGFM, at

which meeting a new chair will be nominated. Mr Nabil Ibrahim Fita, delegate from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was nominated and accepted to act as the Vice-chairperson.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

69. The Chairperson requested proposals for the date and place for the seventh meeting of the WGFM. The delegate from the State of Kuwait offered Kuwait, pending consultation with the relevant authorities.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

70. The report of the meeting was adopted on 8 November at 17.00 hours.

71. The meeting noted with appreciation the kind support of the State of Qatar for hosting and providing administrative support to the meeting.

APPENDIX A

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the meeting
3. Status of implementation of fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting (RECOFI/6/2011/1) that entered into force on 1 January 2012
4. Report on the RECOFI Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI Region (Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 22–24 April 2012)
5. Development of regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management
6. Fifth session of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management:
   a) Summary of main outcomes;
   b) Status of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in RECOFI fisheries, information based on a questionnaire developed by the Sultanate of Oman (paragraph 36 of the report of the meeting);
   c) Consideration of terms of reference for a RECOFI multidisciplinary scientific expert group (paragraph 57 of the report of the meeting, submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran); and
   d) RECOFI participation in the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting (Rome, December 2011) and national inventories of fisheries in RECOFI Members (paragraph 75 of the report of the meeting).
7. Main outcomes of the Near-East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (Muscat, Oman, 26–28 March 2012)
8. Report on the status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved Working Group on Fisheries Management workplan
9. Update of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2013–2014 in relation to the Working Group on Fisheries Management
10. Review of the outcomes of the tripartite initiative on fisheries management cooperation in the Northern area of RECOFI and progress
11. Any other matters
12. Date and place of the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Fisheries Management
13. Adoption of the report

APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C

List of documents

RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/1	Agenda
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/2	Status of the implementation of fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting in recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/3	Report on the RECOFI Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI Region
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/5	Main outcomes of the fifth session of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/7	Consideration of terms of reference for a RECOFI multidisciplinary expert group
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/8	Status and report on RECOFI/FIRMS collaboration
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/9	Main outcomes of the Near-East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/10	Status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved Working Group on Fisheries Management workplan
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/11	Update of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2013–2014 in relation to the Working Group on Fisheries Management
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/12	Review of the outcomes of the tripartite initiative on fisheries management cooperation in the Northern of RECOFI and progress
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.1	List of documents
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.2	List of participants
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.3	Statement by the Assistant-Director General and Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.4	Report of the sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries. Rome, Italy, 10–12 May 2011
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.5	Report of the fifth Meeting of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management. Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), 9–12 October 2011
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.6	Report of the RECOFI–FIRMS Workshop on Resources and Fisheries Inventories. Cairo, Egypt, 12–14 July 2011
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.7	Report of the Near-East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fishing and Social Development, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 26–28 March 2012
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.8	Report of the workshop on social and economic aspects of fisheries in the RECOFI region. Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 22–24 April 2012
RECOFI:WGFM6/2012/Inf.9	Report of the Thirtieth Session of the Committee on Fisheries. Rome, Italy, 9–13 July 2012

APPENDIX D

Opening statement
by
Sheikh Faleh bin Nasser Al Thani
Director-General of Agricultural Research and Development
Ministry of Environment,
Doha, Qatar

Peace be upon you all,

I am honored on my own behalf, and on behalf of His Excellency, the Minister of Environment in Qatar, to welcome you all, and express our pleasure to host this scientific forum, which gathers international and regional experts with specialists in the field of marine fisheries from all the RECOFI member states.

Regarding the main subject of your current meeting, I would like to point out that, to meet national requirements, and to comply with your recommendations that reflect the regional and international requirements, we have recently started in the State of Qatar, to implement an ambitious research project, including: 1) the development of a National Fisheries Information System (NFIS); establishment of Fishing Vessel Monitoring System (VMS); 3) the use of spatial planning techniques and; 4) study the social - economic approach for fisheries sector. This is in addition to the stock assessment projects and ongoing programs for monitoring, control and surveillance.

Based on the work plan of the Fisheries Department in Qatar, we can say that, the recently developed NFIS, will provide all the necessary information on the catch and fishing effort; as well as providing all geo-referenced data on fishing activities, as it is currently being linked to the VMS for fishing boats.

I hope that our efforts contribute to achieving sustainable management of our living marine resources and its sustainability for the future generations in all RECOFI member states.
We appreciate your participation in the current event, and we are confident in your abilities to achieve its desired objectives.

We wish you a pleasant stay in Qatar, and a fruitful discussion supported by the God willing.

APPENDIX E

Opening statement
Mr Piero Mannini, Senior Fishery Officer
on behalf of Mr Abdessalam OuldAhmed
Regional Representative
FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa

Excellency, Sheik Faleh bin Nasser Al Thani, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to each and all of you on the occasion of the opening of the 6th meeting of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) kindly hosted by the Department of Fisheries Wealth, Ministry of Environment, Doha, the State of Qatar.

It is generally acknowledged that the greatest difficulties are encountered in the management of internationally shared fishery resources. Under the terms of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement, highly migratory and straddling stocks are to be managed through RFMOs that are to have coastal states members. RECOFI is one of those RFMOs.

The role and obligations of regional fisheries management organizations, such as RECOFI, in fisheries governance are growing steadily. Simultaneously, strengthening regional fisheries management organizations and their performance still remains the major challenge facing international fisheries governance. Numerous RFMOs are recognizant of the need for greater cooperation between member states and the need to reform their legal and institutional framework. RECOFI is no exception to this situation.

Regional fisheries management organizations such as RECOFI were established by the Member Countries to facilitate and reinforce regional collaboration. The sound management and development of the regional fisheries wealth necessarily require the establishment and development of regional and sub-regional cooperation for fisheries and environmental research. RECOFI appears as a convenient and valid mechanism to promote and enhance the regional dialogue and cooperation for the sustainable development of regional fisheries.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place on 20-22 June 2012. With reference to ocean governance and existing institutional and legal frameworks, the Conference pointed out that at the regional scale Regional fishery bodies (RFBs) are mechanisms through which States and organizations work together towards the conservation, management and/or development of fisheries and related issues. Some RFBs have an advisory mandate, and provide advice, decisions or coordinating mechanisms that are not binding on their members. Other RFBs such as RECOFI have a management mandate and have binding regulatory powers on the management area. Such RFBs are called Regional Fisheries Management Organizations or Arrangements (RFMOs) that focus on fisheries governance at the regional level. Their role and relationship to other initiatives are based on and guided by global governance legal frameworks, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Currently there are more than 50 RFBs worldwide, only about half of which are RFMOs with a management mandate. However, only a limited number of RFMO/As are able to institute binding measures on members in areas beyond national jurisdiction. RECOFI is one of the RFMOs with a management mandate that should be increasingly exercised for the management and wealth of regional fisheries. Such a task poses unique challenges that the Commission should addressed responsibly for the benefit of its Members.

In recent years, the RECOFI through its WGFM has initiated the establishment of a regional strategy for fisheries management based on an ecosystem approach to fisheries with the ultimate goal to ensure long-term sustainability of the resources, the communities and the natural environment supporting them. However, in order to achieve these objectives, in the region covered by RECOFI, significant additional investment is needed in research, human resource development, and institutional strengthening and reforms to create the capacity needed for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development and conservation. In this regard, it is noteworthy to stress that the need for capacity development was underscored by all Members at the Special Meeting on RECOFI Consolidation and Development in May 2010. Regrettably, Members are not providing their Commission, RECOFI, with the needed support to increase the regional capacity for appraise and management of common resources. Much more can and should be done to be more actively involved in the work of RECOFI to benefit from its services.

It must be remarked that the Commission at its Sixth Session in May 2011 noted that the current level of Members contributions was only sufficient to fund the implementation of a limited number of priority activities, and resolved that additional funds would be required if a more ambitious work programme was to be implemented. As a result, the Commission decided to continue applying fixed and equal contribution for Members, and agreed on a three-fold increase (i.e. from USD5 000 to USD15 000) of the Members' annual contributions from 2013 provided that all arrears were liquidated by 31 December 2011. It is of great concern that not all arrears were settled by the given date therefore putting at serious risk the future of the Commission.

This would be most unfortunate as, on the other side, RECOFI is decisively moving from words to facts to assume fully its mandated role as the relevant RFMO in this part of the world and it is not avoiding the challenges posed by its mandate. In fact, the Commission adopted its first fisheries management recommendation, RECOFI/6/2011/1, entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" that entered into effect on 1 January 2012. Still, I trust that the Commission and its advisory bodies as the WGFM are ready to pursue its responsibilities and duties for the well being of its Members and their fisheries.

I wish you all a full and very productive meeting for the benefit of all.

Lastly, I wish to extend my thanks to those in Department of Fisheries Wealth, Ministry of Environment, and FAO who have worked together to make possible and organize this meeting. Special thanks are due to the State of Qatar for hosting this event.

APPENDIX F

Report on the progress towards the implementation of the RECOFI Recommendation on minimum data reporting

PURPOSE

1. The Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1, entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" as adopted by RECOFI at its Sixth Session (Rome, Italy, 10–12 May 2011) and, in accordance with Article V of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Regional Commission for Fisheries, formally took effect on 1 January 2012. This paper summarizes the status of the first formal submission of data according to the Recommendation for consideration by Members for taking actions to resolve issues encountered during this round of submission.

BACKGROUND

2. The 2nd meeting of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) (Cairo, Egypt, 27–30 October 2008) reviewed the major fisheries in the RECOFI region and identified a set of species of primary concern. The meeting further recommended a pragmatic management scheme based on an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management with adaptive management procedures. The Fifth Session of the RECOFI (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 12–14 May 2009) adopted this recommendation and decided to hold a workshop specifically focusing on a review of data and statistics available in the region and stock status reporting.

3. Facing the lack of information commonly accessible through the Region, the FAO/RECOFI Regional Workshop on Stock Indicators and Stock Status Reporting (Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 26–29 July 2009) focused its attention on identifying key issues in the region and determining the minimum data requirement to address those key issues from the perspective of monitoring stocks and fisheries status. The concept of minimum data requirement was further developed through the 3rd meeting of WGFM (Doha, Qatar, 20–22 October 2009) and the 4th meeting of WGFM (Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 3–5 October 2010) and the Sixth Session of RECOFI (Rome, Italy, 10–12 May 2011) endorsed the Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1, entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" together with its commitment for the Recommendation to take effect in January 2012.

4. In order to ensure that all Members would be capable to cope with minimum data requirement, a series of consultations and surveys on national data collection system were held, utilizing the opportunity of other meetings, including ad-hoc discussion at the Sixth Session of RECOFI, the fifth meeting of the WGFM, the Workshop on Minimum Data Collection and Reporting (Cairo, Egypt, 10-11 July 2011) and the Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI Region (Manama, Bahrain 22-24 April 2012). Through this process, the individual Members agreed their own format of reporting according to the Recommendation and created work plans to improve the national data collection system to completely fulfill the requirement defined by the Recommendation in near future.

DATA SUBMISSION ACCORDING TO THE RECOFI RECOMMENDATION ON MINIMUM DATA REPORTING

5. The deadline for the submission of 2011 data was set as prior to 31 August 2012. However, no Members succeeded in submitting the 2011 data before this due date. The status of data submission at 1 November 2012 is summarized as below with the more detailed information by countries available in Appendix 1.

- This round of data submission focused on catch and effort data of shrimp trawls, wire-traps, gillnets and hook-and-lines. The information required for stock assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel was specifically requested this time, waiting for review and further evaluation at the Stock Assessment workshop.
- Bahrain, Iran (I.R.), and Qatar submitted the 2011 data using the format agreed during the preparation phase.
- Saudi Arabia provided historical catch and effort information back to the 1990s depending on gears, although it has not yet submitted the 2011 data.
- Although Oman and Kuwait submitted data prior to the meeting, those submissions did not contain any new information.
- Iraq and UAE has consistently indicated their difficulty in submitting catch by gear data, due to low level of catch and their market-based data collection system. An agreed procedure of data submission has not yet been established and no data was submitted.
- During the preparation phase, Kuwait and Qatar indicated their intention to modify their data collection system, while Iran and Oman committed to make their historical information available to the RECOFI. It is envisaged to learn about the progress at the meeting.

REGIONAL DATABASE AND INFORMATION NETWORK

6. The fifth meeting of the WGFM agreed on the need to establish a regional database and information network that would support information sharing among member countries, including those submitted based on the Recommendation of Minimum Data Reporting, and implementation of regional fishery management. The Statistics and Information Service of FAO (FIPS) suggested a range of potential services that could be provided, while one member country indicated its interest to host a RECOFI regional database and information network. Though it was agreed to continue informal and technical communication to seek for the most suitable approach, there has not been any progress made on issue. Indicative work proposed at the fifth meeting of the WGFM (Appendix 2) has encountered substantial delays due to lack of correspondence and a shortage of time and human resources available.

7. As an interim, the FIPS is planning to convert the data submitted based on the Recommendation into FishStat format to facilitate their access and analysis by Member countries as a common dissemination tool together with the existing RECOFI capture production data.

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE WORKING GROUP

8. The WGFM is invited to review the current status of the implementation of the RECOFI Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area and to comment on it, as appropriate. In particular, the WGFM is requested to provide feedbacks / guidance to the Secretariat on:

- Confirmation of commitment to implement the RECOFI Recommendation on minimum data reporting and regional collaborative management
- Progress made by individual countries in modification of national data collection system and availability of historical catch and effort information by gears; and
- Logistics, functionalities and responsibility of the regional database and information network to support the fishery and aquaculture management of the RECOFI region, especially through the implementation of the RECOFI Recommendation on minimum data reporting.

Appendix 1. Status of data submission by countries

i) Bahrain

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before	
Shrimp Trawl														
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates													
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	To 1990
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category				Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**					
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category													
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category	Y	Y	Y										
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	To 1990
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of other finfishes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*													
2-a-v	Amount of discards													
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard													
2-b	BRD related information													

* No separation in type/ category; ** Total tow duration;

Gillnets														
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Amount of discards													
5-b	*Species composition of discards*													
Wire-traps														
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
	Amount of discards													
5-b	*Species composition of discards*													
Hook-and-line														
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					

	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Amount of discards								
5-b	*Species composition of discards*								
Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel									
4-a-i	*Annual catch*								
	Monthly catch								
4-a-ii	Fork length composition								
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*								
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel								

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

ii) Islamic Republic of Iran

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before
Shrimp Trawl													
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates	Y	Y										
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories	Y	Y										
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category	Y*	Y*										
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category												
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category												
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp	Y	Y										
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y										
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y										
	Catch of other finfishes	Y	Y										
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*												
2-a-v	Amount of discards	Y	Y										
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard												
2-b	BRD related information	Y**	Y**										
		* Total dow duration reported; ** General configuration											
Gillnets													
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y										
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y										
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y										
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Wire-traps													
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y										
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y										
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y										
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Hook-and-line													
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y	Y										
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch	Y	Y										
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y	Y										

	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y	Y
	Amount of discards		
5-b	*Species composition of discards*		

Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

4-a-i	*Annual catch*
	Monthly catch
4-a-ii	Fork length composition
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

iii) Kuwait

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before
Shrimp Trawl													
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates												
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories					Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category												
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category												
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category					Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp					Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												
	Catch of other finfishes												
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*												
2-a-v	Amount of discards												
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard												
2-b	BRD related information												
						* No separation in vessel type/ category							
Gillnets													
3-a	Number of days at sea												
	Alternative annual efforts					Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	
3-b	Total catch												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Wire-traps													
3-a	Number of days at sea												
	Alternative annual efforts					Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	
3-b	Total catch												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Hook-and-line													
3-a	Number of days at sea												
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												

	Amount of discards
5-b	*Species composition of discards*

Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

4-a-i	*Annual catch*
	Monthly catch
4-a-ii	Fork length composition
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

iv) Sultanate of Oman

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before
Shrimp Trawl													
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates	Non applicable											
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories												
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category												
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category												
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category												
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												
	Catch of other finfishes												
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*												
2-a-v	Amount of discards												
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard												
2-b	BRD related information												
Gillnets													
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y									to 1985
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y									to 1985
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Wire-traps													
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y									to 1985
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y									to 1985
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
Hook-and-line													
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y									to 1985
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y									to 1985
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y									to 1985

	Amount of discards
5-b	*Species composition of discards*

Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

4-a-i	*Annual catch*
	Monthly catch
4-a-ii	Fork length composition
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

v) Qatar

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before
Shrimp Trawl													
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates	Non applicable											
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories												
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category												
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category												
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category												
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												
	Catch of other finfishes												
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*												
2-a-v	Amount of discards												
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard												
2-b	BRD related information												
Gillnets													
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Alternative annual efforts	Y*	Y*	Y*									
3-b	Total catch	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
		* Sample at Khor and Shumal											
Wire-traps													
3-a	Number of days at sea	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Alternative annual efforts	Y*	Y*	Y*									
3-b	Total catch	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays	Y*	Y*	Y*									
	Amount of discards												
5-b	*Species composition of discards*												
		* Sample at Khor and Shumal											
Hook-and-line													
3-a	Number of days at sea												
	Alternative annual efforts												
3-b	Total catch												
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel												
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays												

	Amount of discards
5-b	*Species composition of discards*

Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

4-a-i	*Annual catch*
	Monthly catch
4-a-ii	Fork length composition
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

vi) Saudi Arabia

		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000 and before	
Shrimp Trawl														
2-a-i	Opening/closing dates		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
2-a-ii	Number of vessels by types and size categories		Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	Y*	to 1991
2-a-iii	Average tow duration by vessel type/ category													
	Average number of tows per day by vessel type/ category		Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	Y**	to 1991
	Total number of days at sea by vessel type/ category		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
2-a-iv	Catch of shrimp		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
	Catch of swimming crab, cuttlefish, emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
	Catch of other finfishes		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
5-a	*Shrimp species composition*		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1991
2-a-v	Amount of discards													
2-a-vi	Species composition of bycatch and discard													
2-b	BRD related information													

* only for investor boats; ** obtainable from reported data

Gillnets														
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Alternative annual efforts		Y	Y	Y									
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y*							
	Amount of discards													
5-b	*Species composition of discards*													

* Data in species group

Wire-traps														
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1994
	Alternative annual efforts		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1994
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1994
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1994
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	to 1994
	Amount of discards													
5-b	*Species composition of discards*													

Hook-and-line														
3-a	Number of days at sea		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Alternative annual efforts		Y	Y	Y									
3-b	Total catch		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Catch of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
	Catch of emperors, groupers, sharks, and rays		Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y*							

	Amount of discards		
5-b	*Species composition of discards*		

* Data in species group

Narrow-barred Spanish mackerel			
4-a-i	*Annual catch*	Y	Y
	Monthly catch	Y	Y
4-a-ii	Fork length composition		
4-a-iii	*Catch, effort and fork length composition of targeted gears*		
4-b	Relevant information on narrow-barred Spanish mackerel		

Orange color indicating the data submitted after 1 January 2012, and green indicating those submitted during the preparation phase.

Appendix 2.

Indicative time schedule for the implementation of the RECOFI Recommendation of Minimum Data Reporting (Extract from RECOFI:WGFM5/2011/7 Appendix 3)

Workshop in July 2011 (Completed)

- First round of consolidation exercise focusing on mandatory catch and effort data separated by fisheries
- Brainstorming of format, location, functionalities of RECOFI Fishery Management Database and information network

Between July Workshop and WGFM-V (October 2011)

- Second round of consolidation exercise and Members to submit historical mandatory catch and effort data separated by fisheries up to 2000 in the same format as the first round exercise, as much as possible. Indicative due date is the end of August.

  Action: Members
- Prepare and distribute a consolidated database to members before the middle of September. **Action: Secretariat**
- Prepare specific proposal on database maintenance services and supporting information network with indication of corresponding cost if FAO will take a maintenance responsibility.

  Action: FAO

WGFM-V in October 2011

- Review of the second round of consolidation exercise; Historical catch and effort data separated by fisheries; optional data and information if available
- Agree on logistics (e.g. location, responsibility, and data sharing procedure) of RECOFI Fishery Management database and information network
- Discussion on set stock indicators to be calculated from the consolidated RECOFI catch and effort data together with preliminary examination of indicators
- Further clarification on data sharing protocols for data requirement for Spanish mackerels and various optional data and information

Prior to January 2012

- Third round of consolidation exercise; mandatory data requirement for Spanish mackerels, especially length frequency data and monthly catch and optional data and information
- Setting the RECOFI Fishery Management database and testing

Jan.2012 – Aug. 2012

- Setting Information network and testing
- Submission of data and information relevant with the Recommendation up to 2010. Data and information already submitted during the preparatory consolidation exercise would be revised and updated if necessary

- Training on utilization of database and network if necessary
- (Workshop of Spanish mackerel assessment, depending on the decision at WGFM-V)

31 August 2012

- Database and Information network become fully operational
- Submission of 2011 data and information required by the Recommendation

WGFM-VI October 2012

- Development of a set of stock and fishery indicators based on the RECOFI Fishery Management database and develop a fishery management recommendation to be submitted to the Commission (RECOFI-VII, May 2013)

APPENDIX G

Summary report of the RECOFI Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI region

INTRODUCTION

1. The RECOFI Workshop on the Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI region was held in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain from 22 to 24 April 2012, following the agreement at the sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries, held in Rome from 10 to 12 May 2011. The meeting was convened by the RECOFI Secretary. The meeting was attended by 18 delegates from four Member countries and two observers, as well as the RECOFI Secretariat.

2. The objectives of the workshop included the following:

- understand the situation of the national and regional marine fisheries in the RECOFI region;
- review the availability of data on socio-economic statistics;
- analyse work and other relevant research activities in Member countries; and
- hold detailed discussion of socio-economic aspects of RECOFI fisheries.

3. The need for an improved understanding on the status of socio-economic aspects of the fisheries, affecting fisheries sustainability and fishermen livelihoods; the identification suitable common socio-economic variables and indicators to be used around the region; an outline an integrated statistics and knowledge database for the purpose of socio-economic assessment, and the establishment of network of socio-economists was highlighted.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

4. The workshop discussed the social and economic aspects of fisheries in RECOFI, reviewed the availability of data on the socio-economic statistics, analysis work and other relevant research activities in member countries and formulated a RECOFI action plan for regional cooperation in assessment of socio-economic aspects through identifying regional socio-economic indicators to be used at both national and regional levels.

5. The integration of the human dimension, including the social and economic aspects, is essential in the context of the ecosystem approach of fisheries management. For this purpose, it was recognized that key issues in social and economic aspects in the management of fisheries and of the people fishing in the Region must be identified together with necessary information indicators to monitor their status.

6. Country reports were presented and reviewed in order to gain a better understanding of the existing information of individual member countries and the types of information available. It was noted that past studies in obtaining information on socio-economics of fisheries faced a number of challenges; namely accuracy of data and methodology. The approach was emphasized as a key element and working with fishermen in a manner that reflects the importance of their knowledge and experience, was noted for obtaining accurate data. Some participants further supported this point and noted that the reality of the background and education level must be taken into account when approaching this kind of work. The need to support fishermen in the process was highlighted, noting that by ensuring a positive relationship between government and fishermen, the possibility for obtaining good socio-economic information would be enhanced. A number of participants noted activities their countries currently do to support fishers.

7. A set of indicators was presented to the workshop in the categories of macro-economic, micro-economic and social aspects of fisheries, which would be used to guide member countries in enhancing its understandings on the general status of its social and economic condition and in identifying the area of prioritization to plan for types of social and economic issues they need to gather in the future.

8. Discussion highlights were presented, and examples of social and economic aspects to consider for the RECOFI region, including:

Macro-economic

- Contribution of fisheries to national economy
- Domestic consumption of fish
- Fish imports and exports

Micro-economic

- Vessel revenue, profit and cost (fixed and variable)
- Landing weight and value
- Vessel characteristics: Engine power, Gross tonnage, vessel value, gears used
- Working hours/days/year/vessel
- Market prices for different species

Social aspects

- Employment: number of crew on vessel, nationality, primary and secondary sector (and who: women, men, nationals, non-nationals)
- Vessel ownership (individual or partnership)
- Method of crew payment (wage, share method)
- Other income sources of fishers (primary source of employment, etc)
- Number of household employed in fisheries (primary, secondary)
- Age, education level of fishers
- Main threats to livelihoods
- Social and financial services available (insurance, health, credit, savings etc)
- Organization of fishers (cooperatives and their roles)
- How/where marketed, roles and profits of fishers, traders, processors, transporters along the supply chain

9. The above indicators were to be considered by workshop participants when designing the survey questionnaire, which would contribute to the overall objectives of the socio-economic study. Additionally, it was recognized that the data to be collected through the RECOFI Recommendation on Minimum Data Reporting (Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1) would cover some of the socio-economic indicators presented.

10. The objectives of this study were agreed to be the following:

- determine socio-demographic characteristics such as age structure, sex, marriage status, family size, and education level, etc.;
- highlight socio-economic conditions of the fishermen;
- estimate costs and earnings of fishing vessels in selected fishing areas;
- describe the common problems of selected fishery areas;
- describe relations between the fishermen and their organizations, and indicate the effectiveness of the organization from the member's point of view as well as fisheries co-management; and
- outline recommendations for decision makers to be used in local fishery management and stakeholders' livelihood development plans.

11. Workshop participants were reminded of the Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1 entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area" (Appendix I). In accordance with Article V of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Regional Commission for Fisheries, the Commission agreed that the recommendation would take effect on 1 January 2012; all Member countries are bound to comply with this recommendation. Focusing on social and economic aspects, there were certain priorities which were already agreed at the Workshop on Fishery Stock Indicators and Stock Status, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, in 2009[1], including that the social and economic importance of the fisheries sector should be measured by the extent of its contribution to the local food supply and its contribution to exports both in value and quantity. A hierarchical tree for social and economic aspects was presented, and it was emphasized that this would be needed for future work in this area to be clear on the goals and how these would be achieved. It was highlighted how different types of information could be collected, including gathering this information from existing census and administrative records if available.

12. A work plan for the socio-economic study was proposed, for the discussion and modification by the participants. The proposal included the following:

- Develop a comprehensive profile of the study site, including:
    - Boundaries of the study site
    - Past and present :
        - Demographic structure
        - Economic structure
        - Social structure
        - Infrastructure provision.
        - Development schemes in the study site, past, present and future.

- Field work
    - Identify required data and information
    - Conducting field surveys
    - Designing a questionnaire form
    - Pilot survey and feedback

- Data analysis and socio-economic assessment
    - Data entry and verification
    - Data analysis

13. It was determined that the best way to proceed would be through the nomination of focal points for each country to carry out the above work plan, and that a workplan proposal needs to be developed and submitted at the forthcoming sixth meeting of the WGFM to be held in the State of Qatar in November 2012.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

14. The workshop came to the following main conclusions:

- There is a general need to enhance the collection of socio-economic information with a matter of priority by the member countries;
- Non-fisheries related activities have substantial and sometimes serious impacts on sustainability of fisheries and fishers livelihoods and the enhanced communication and collaboration with the relevant sectors need to be taken into consideration;
- The social and economic contribution and issues must include those by the secondary and tertiary sectors, in addition to the primary production sector;

[1] www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2170e/i2170e00.pdf

- There are challenges in collecting socio-economic information and the further collaboration with other ministries, e.g. those responsible for statistics, economic, rural development, need to be addressed;
- Information available and data collection method varies across member countries (amount, quality);
- Dynamics of employment (crew, owners, captains, hiring labor) and licensing is an important issue;
- Fishing as a full-time/part-time activity as well as those under recreational/occasional/subsistent fishers – all people fishing should be considered;
- Economic compensation for management measures (closed seasons) are in place in some countries as well as different kind of subsidies, which should be taken into account;
- Fishers are often hold less power in the supply chain and are reliant on the decisions of middlemen for income.

15. The workshop made the following recommendations:

- The regional work plan on socio-economic work should be formulated to support technical capacity development to advance knowledge on the socio-economics in the region.
- Such work plan must be applicable, practical and useful, including the recommended socio-economic survey questionnaires in manner that can be easily understood by the target questionnaire respondents and with clear definitions of terminologies used.
- Social and economic aspects must be integrated and incorporated into the RECOFI fisheries management framework to ensure a more holistic approach in line with the ecosystem approach.
- The Task Group would be established to address the above mentioned issues with a Terms of Reference (below).

16. The workshop agreed to use the draft questionnaire that was presented as the basis for work of the Task Group gathering the required information using the technical resources available in their respective countries. The workshop also considered a potential in developing a regional field project on the social and economic aspects of fisheries in the region. The workshop emphasized the need to enhance communication among all RECOFI members as well as with the relevant organizations such as the GCC fisheries committee to technically cooperate for adequately responding to the challenges faced by the regional fisheries including their social and economic performance.

17. It was felt that the workshop had constituted an important and first ever opportunity to discuss the fisheries social and economic issues in the region. This was much appreciated and it was hoped that this participatory and collaborative process will be continued.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference for the Task Group to address the socio-economic dimension of fisheries in RECOFI

The meeting agreed on the need to formulate a plan of work focused on the comprehension and assessment of the social and economic aspects in the RECOFI region relating to and in support of the sustainable management of marine fisheries in the region.

The meeting agreed on the establishment of a Task Group to address the socio-economic dimension of fisheries in the region. The Task Group is established to support and facilitate the work of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) focused on the social and economic aspects of RECOFI fisheries. The Task Group carries out advisory and liaison functions with respect to the WGFM's programme of work in the field of fishery socio-economics. In addition, the Task Group, through its Coordinator maintains contact with the Commission's Secretariat on issues related to the socio-economic work plan and related activities.

The regional Task Group is composed by the following national experts:

Bahrain: Nasser Al-Saffar/ Ebtissam Khalaf
Qatar: Adel Suliman Al-Ali
Oman: Ruqaiya Al-Bulushi
Saudi Arabia: Waleed Krimly
Iraq: Vartan Azzad Serkess

The RECOFI Task Group on Social and Economic issues is coordinated by Mr Nasser Al-Saffar/ Ms Ebtissam Khalaf (henceforth Task Group Coordinator).

The meeting agreed on the following terms of reference for the Task Group:

1) Keep informed the relevant national authorities and counterparts on the RECOFI socio-economic work plan and related activities;
2) Identify and liaise with the existing social and economic expertise in each country;
3) Promote and coordinate the implementation of the fishery socio-economic activities in the member countries including basic information gathering, collation and compilation;
4) Contribute to the implementation of the RECOFI socio-economic work including the revision and pilot execution a survey questionnaire;
5) To ensure the effective flow of communications regarding the RECOFI activities to and from national scientific and institutional counterparts, and from relevant stakeholders;
6) Assist the Task Group Coordinator to formulate a regional work plan for consideration by the WGFM at its sixth meeting (Qatar, October 2012);

APPENDIX H

Socio-economic aspects of fisheries in RECOFI region exploratory questionnaire

Country: Bahrain……. Local Currency BD =2.667(US$)

Fishing Region: (X) Gulf ( ) Gulf of Oman ( ) Arabian Sea ( ) Red Sea ( ) Other

Interviewer Name:.....Abdulkarim Al Radhi Date: 14 October 2012
Ebtisam Khalaf
.....Nassir Al Saffar

1) General information on marine capture fisheries (In Bahrain only one artisanal fishing sector)

-Fishing areas (order of most frequented): Bahrain Territorial Water (Gulf)

Total number of vessels by type:
(343) Dhow boat (2167) speedboat ( ) recreational ( ) other, specify

Total number of vessels by type and engine HP
(12) Without engine (245) speedboat using 30 hp (1922) speedboat using 170 hp[1].
(343) dhow using 280 hp

Total number of vessels by gears used:

Gear/Boat	Gear/Boat	Boats
S1	Dhow/Shrimp trawl	222
S2	Speedboat/Shrimp trawl	104
G1	Dhow/Larg wire trap	100
G2	Speedboat/Small wire trap	693
GC	Speedboat/Crabs wire trap	169
L1	Dhow/Gillnet	5
L2	Speedboat/Gillnet	245
H1	Dhow/Hook&line	16
H2	Speedboat/Hook&line	914
HL1	Dhow/Longline	0
HL2	Speedboat/Longline	30
LD	Speedboat/ladle	23
Total		2 498
Barrier trap (Haddrah)	# of Haddrah	487

Other (Specify): 12 boat without engine .

- Main landing sites Muharraq pier , Sitra pier, Ras rayeh pier....., ..., ...

- Bahrain Total production by years 2005 (11 854 tonnes) 2006 (15 595 tonnes) 2007 (15 011 tonnes) 2008 (14 175 tonnes) 2009 (16 356 tonnes) 2010 (13 557 tonnes) adding 2011 (9 915 tonnes)

[1] About 35% of speed boat used two engines

- Main species caught and percent from the total catch. For the years mentioned above

Species 1..

RUBIAN (25%)	**Shrimp most of it (Penaeus semisulcatus)**

Species 2 (Rabbit fish Siganus spp 11%.....( )) Species 3 Grouper (Epinephelus spp) 0.1%.....(%) 4 (Crabs Portunus Pelagicus 31%)

Fishing seasons (Months)
Shrimping season from 15 July to 15 March) (Open and Closed season)
Grouper peak season in April and May
Rabbit fish peak season in March, April and May
Crabs peak season from June to September

-Which of the following general tools of fisheries management do you feel are most effective in reducing fishing mortality? Rank most effective = 1 least effective = 5

Large and long closed area	(3)
Short term closed area	(1)
Mesh size regulations	(1)
Trip limits	(1)
Tools limits	(3)

-List the laws that you think might be easily accepted and respected by fishermen:
1) Shrimp close and open season regulations
2)Fish licensing policy (One licence per fisherman)
Crabs season regulation
4)Nationalization of fishing jobs
5) Reduction of fishing efforts (boats, fishermen, tools...)
6) Retirement

-List the laws you feel are negative for the livelihoods of fishermen:
1)_____ 2)_____3)_____

-Is it your feeling that fishermen generally want to comply with fisheries regulations:

( ) Yes (X)No

-Do you feel there is adequate fisheries enforcement? ( ) Yes (X) No

-Please estimate to the nest of your ability, what percent of fishermen usually comply with laws and regulations: (20%)

2) Sector organization: (X) Ministry (X) Department ( ) Division ( ) other identify we can add sector chart / hierarchal chart
Royal Decree has issued in this month to transfer Fisheries Department from Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wild Life to Ministry of Municipality and a new Chart to organize Fisheries Department will issued in Future.

3) Main problems and attitude

- Conflict with other development projects: Tourism ( ) Oil Industry (X) Maritime ( ) Transportation (X) Industry () Agriculture (X) Urbanization ( ) others (Specify) Dredging and reclamation in sea ___ _

- Problems regarding coastguard and water surface police Yes (X) No ( ) describe Coordination is not very effective

-Problems with local administration: yes ( ) No (X) describe:

-Problem on finding Captain and crew yes (X) No ( ) describe:

Other problems (Specify): -

Not available Intensive Control and Surveillance (X)

4) Overview of the social relevance of marine fisheries

Provide the following information when it is available:

- Number of fishermen by subsectors .9164 fishermen (2004 fishery Census) (only Artisanal sector fishing in Bahrain). . . . . .. (Artisanal) ..... (Small scale) ..... (Commercial) ..... (Industrial ..... (foreign fleet)
It will be better to harmonize the names of the fishing fleets

- Ownership forms: .. …….State owned) ……..company owned) (Individual owned).

- Method applied for income distribution among the crew and the vessel's owner:

( ) wages (X) share system.
Splitting according to the fleet type

- Fishermen communities: ( ) urban areas () Rural areas fishermen villages (X) Camps ( )

-Services and facilities available. (X) Pipe line water (X) Electricity (X) Schools (X) Health
care ( ) others, Slipway(X), Workshops for engines and boats(X),Shaded areas for work
Specify _____ _

- Fishermen organizations: ( ) cooperative, ( ) union, ( ) syndical we can add others Associations (X)

- Main activities of the fishermen organizations and services provide to the members.: Nothing

- Historical trend of the number of citizen and foreign fishermen in recent years (2005-20 10).

Year	Citizen Fishermen	Foreign Fishermen
2004 (Census)	6171	2993
2006		
2007		
2008		
2009		
2011 (Snap Survey)	6844	5736

- Main social issues and fishermen complaints: we recommend to split it to: main social issues, and other complaints

(X) fishing grounds (X) inadequate fisheries enforcement ( ) poor social facilities provided

( ) insufficient landing facilities (X) Conflict with other fishers (X) Problems regarding
fishermen organization. (X)Too many fishing boats

5) Overview of the economic relevance of marine fisheries

Provide the following information when it is available:

- The contributions of fishery sector (artisanal, small scale, commercial, and industrial, foreign
fleet) to national food security. (X) high moderate ( ) Low ( )

-The gross consumption of fishing products per inhabitant of the country. (6.000 Kg.)

- The contribution of fish protein intake in the gross animal protein intake.

( ) high (X) moderate () low

-Production value in US$ in the recent years (2005-2010)

2005 …22.640 million… 2006 …35.268 million….. .2007
…30.123 million 2008……32.657 miilion… 2009 43.872
million ..... .
2010…47.845 million… . 2011…24.600…million…..

- Fish contribution to the Gross National Product (GNP) (0.2%).

- Employment created directly by the fishing processing industry in
the country (…700…People) a. National, b. Foreign

-Fish market chain and margins: Fisherman average price ( ) Middleman average price ( ) Wholesaler, average price (10% of quantity value selling in auction) Retailers average price (BD 0.3/kg) Consumer average price (BD 1.5/kg) others ( )

-Average fisherman income comparing with national average: (X) much
lower) little lower ( ) similar

-Access to credit: (X) banks () family (X) fish traders(wholesaler) ( ) savings ( ) materials

suppliers others()

- To what extent the fishing sector of the country depends upon foreign trade, for both imports and exports:

Imports are higher ( ) Exports are higher ( ) both are equal (X)

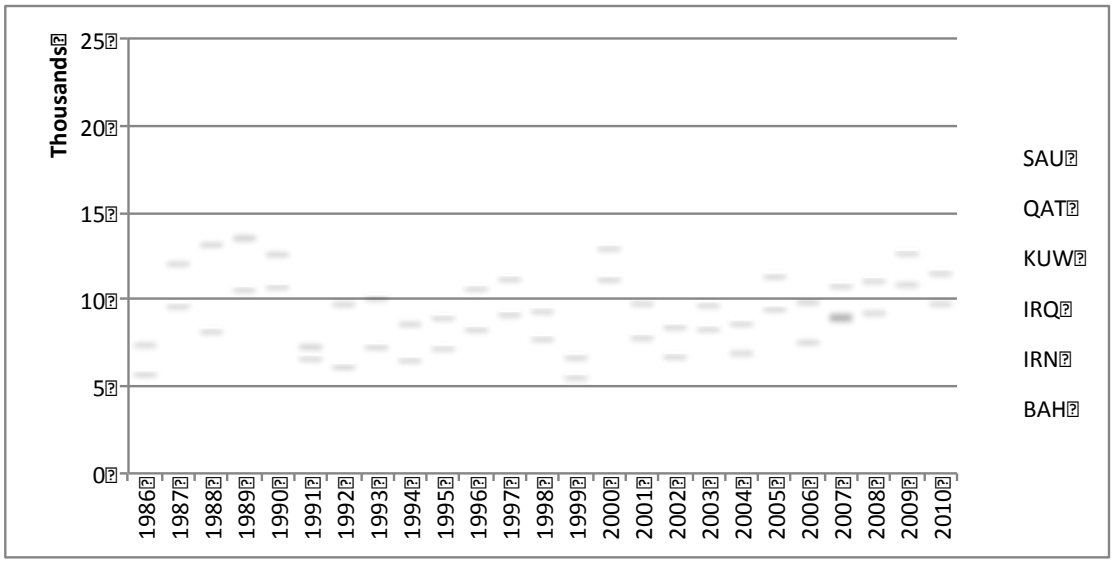
Manama fish central market is the main market for fish export and import

APPENDIX I

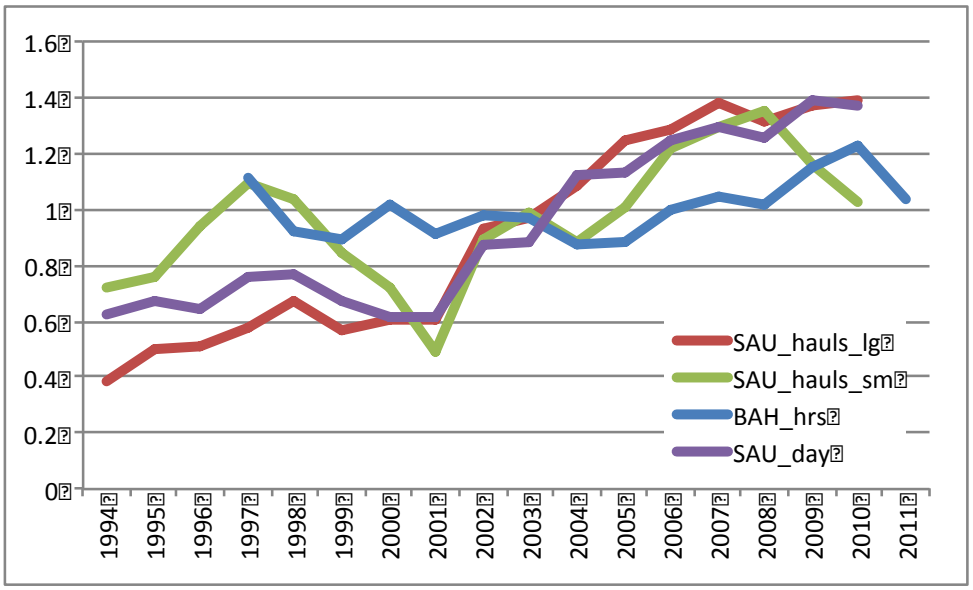
Preliminary analysis on the current status of the fisheries resources in the region

Shrimp abundance:

Shrimp catch in Gulf by countries
Source: RECOFI catch data

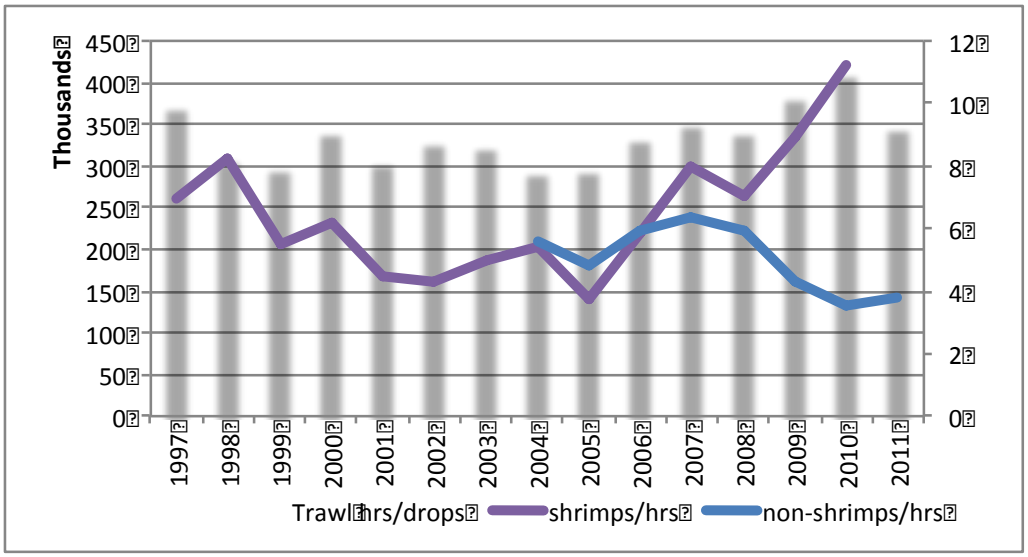


Shrimp efforts standardized with 1997–2010 period
Source: Min. reporting data submitted by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia



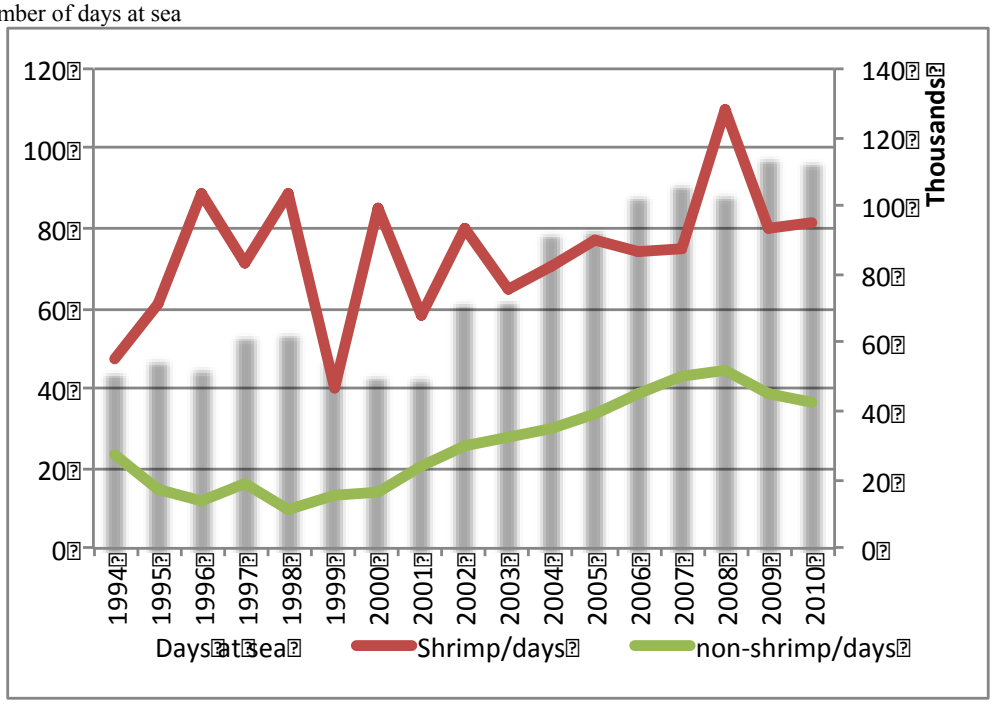
Shrimp and non-shrimp CPUE – Bahrain

Source: Min data reporting by Bahrain
S1 and S2 combined; effort – trawl hours for 1997-2008, drops for 2009–2011
Shrimp catch of 1997–2003 from RECOFI DB



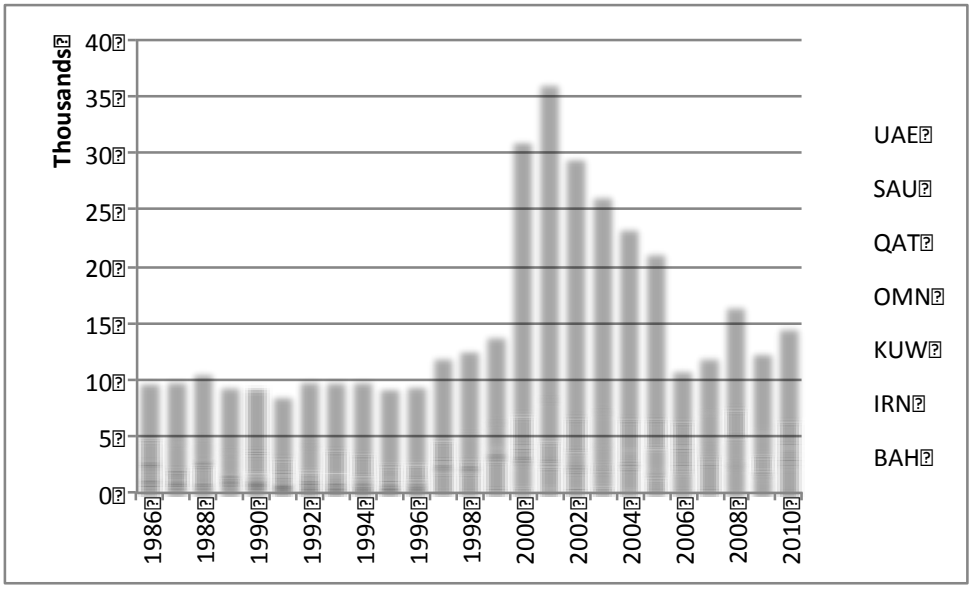
Shrimp and non-shrimp CPUE – Saudi Arabia

Source: Min data reporting by Saudi Arabia
Small and large vessels of all areas combined;
Effort – number of days at sea

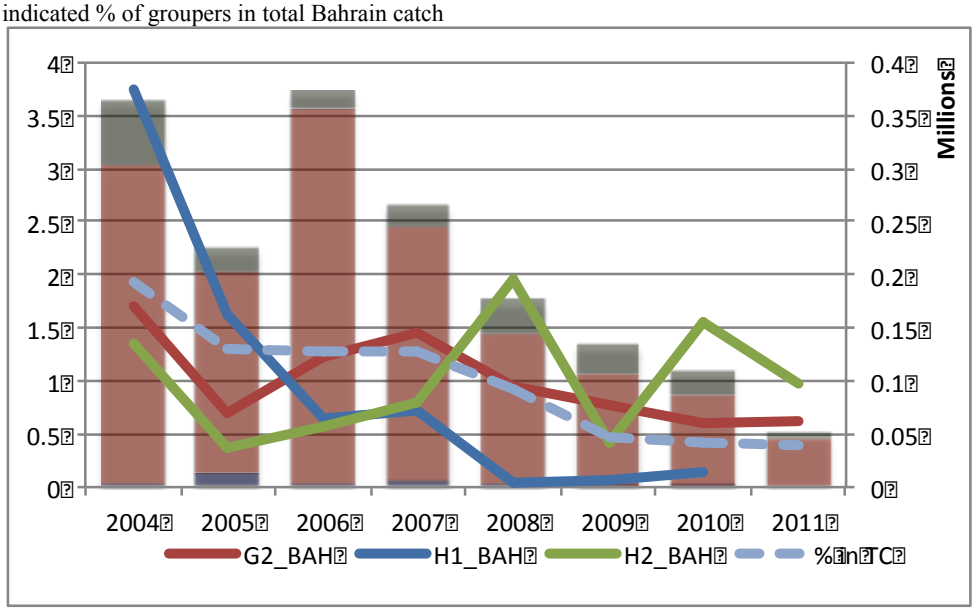


Groupers abundance:

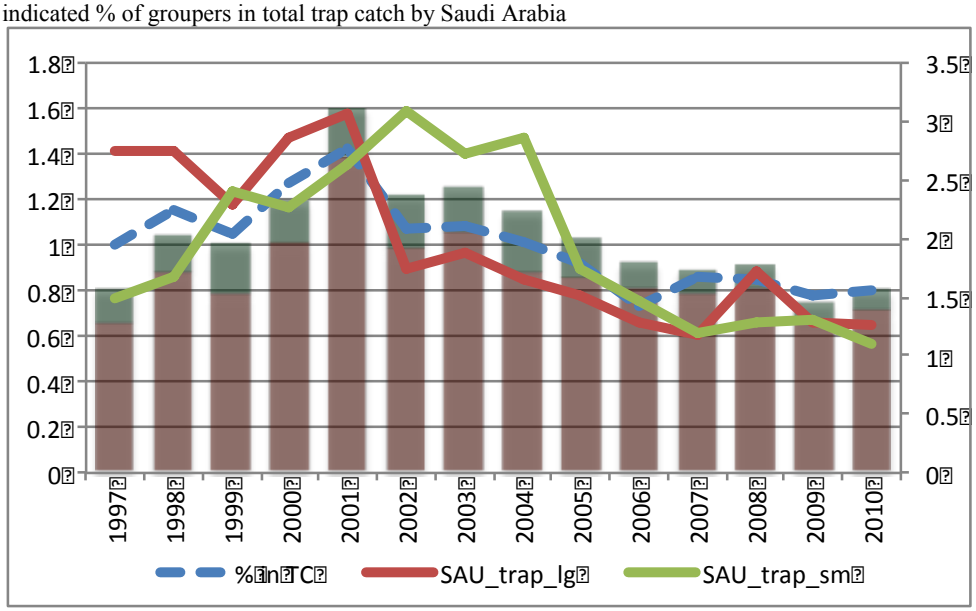
Groupers catch in Gulf by countries
Source: RECOFI catch DB



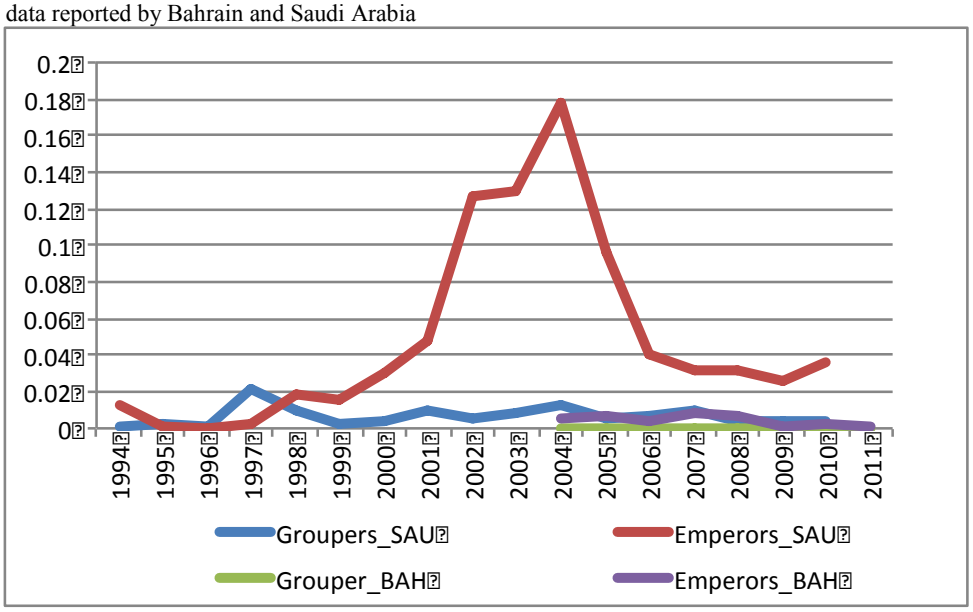
Catch and CPUE of Groupers by Bahrain
Source: Min data submitted by Bahrain
Stack bar indicated catch by gears selected for CPUE
Broken line indicated % of groupers in total Bahrain catch



Trap catch and CPUE of groupers by Saudi Arabia
Source: Min data submitted by Saudi Arabia
Stack bar indicated trap catch of small and large boats
Lines indicated trap CPUE in catch / trap
Broken line indicated % of groupers in total trap catch by Saudi Arabia

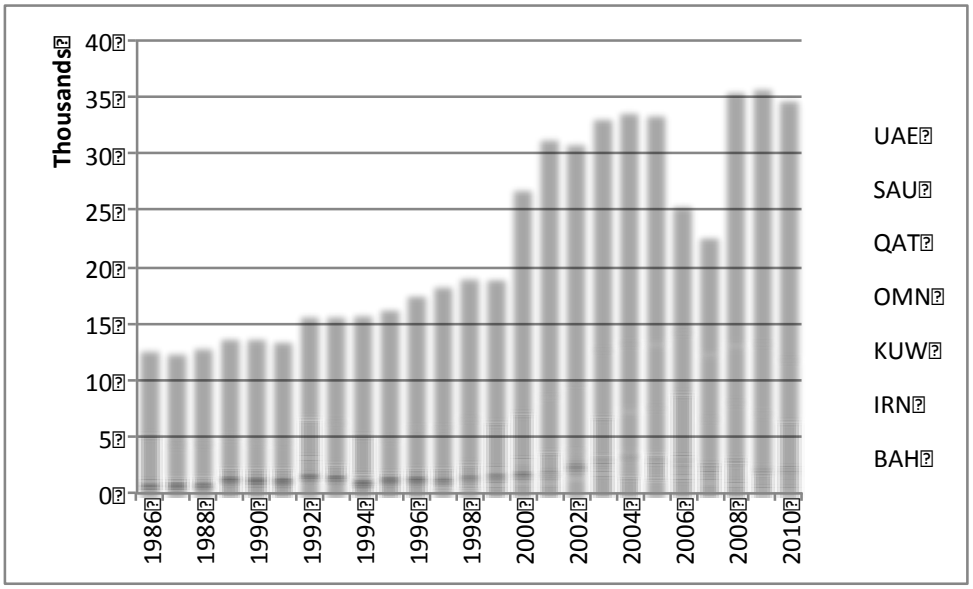


Proportion of groupers and emperors in shrimp trawl retained bycatch
Source: Min data reported by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia

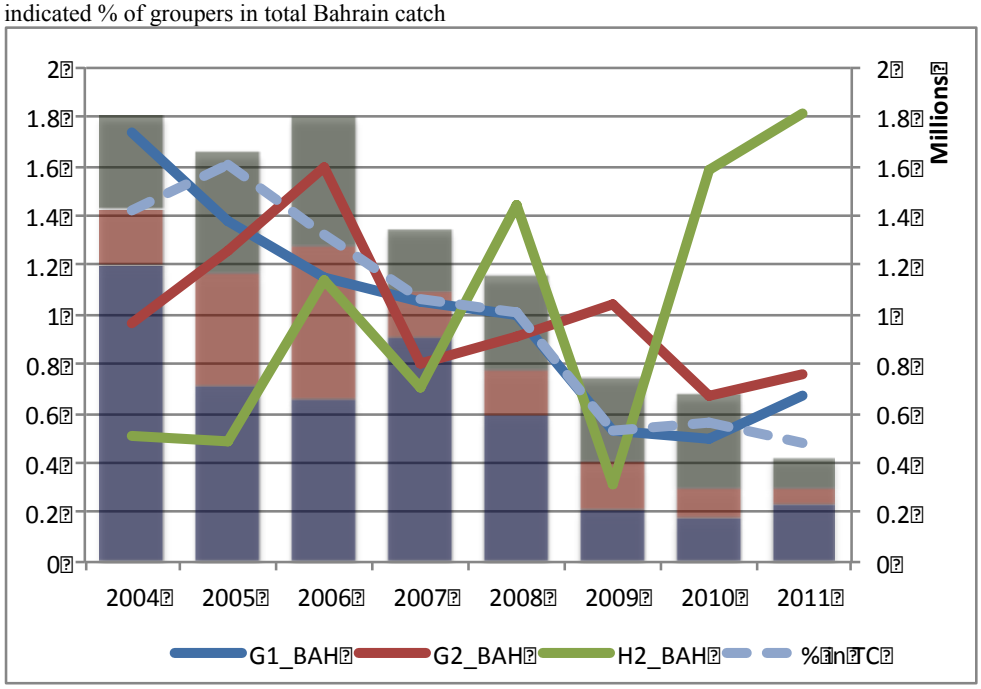


Emperors abundance:

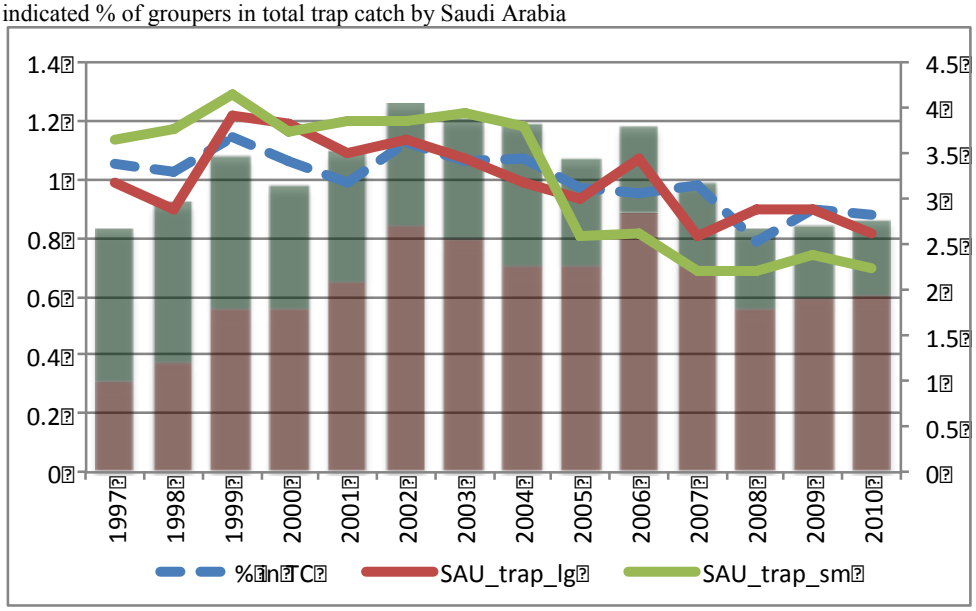
Emperors catch in Gulf by countries
Source: RECOFI catch DB



Catch and CPUE of Emperors by Bahrain
Source: Min data submitted by Bahrain
Stack bar indicated catch by gears selected for CPUE
Broken line indicated % of groupers in total Bahrain catch

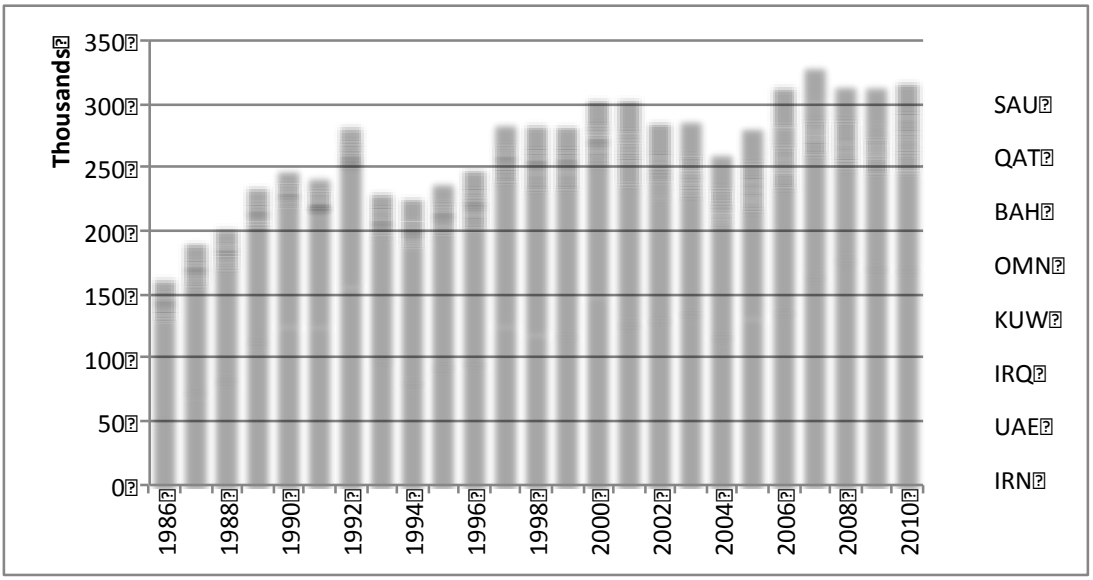


Trap catch and CPUE of Emperors by Saudi Arabia
Source: Min data submitted by Saudi Arabia
Stack bar indicated trap catch of small and large boats
Lines indicated trap CPUE in catch / trap
Broken line indicated % of groupers in total trap catch by Saudi Arabia

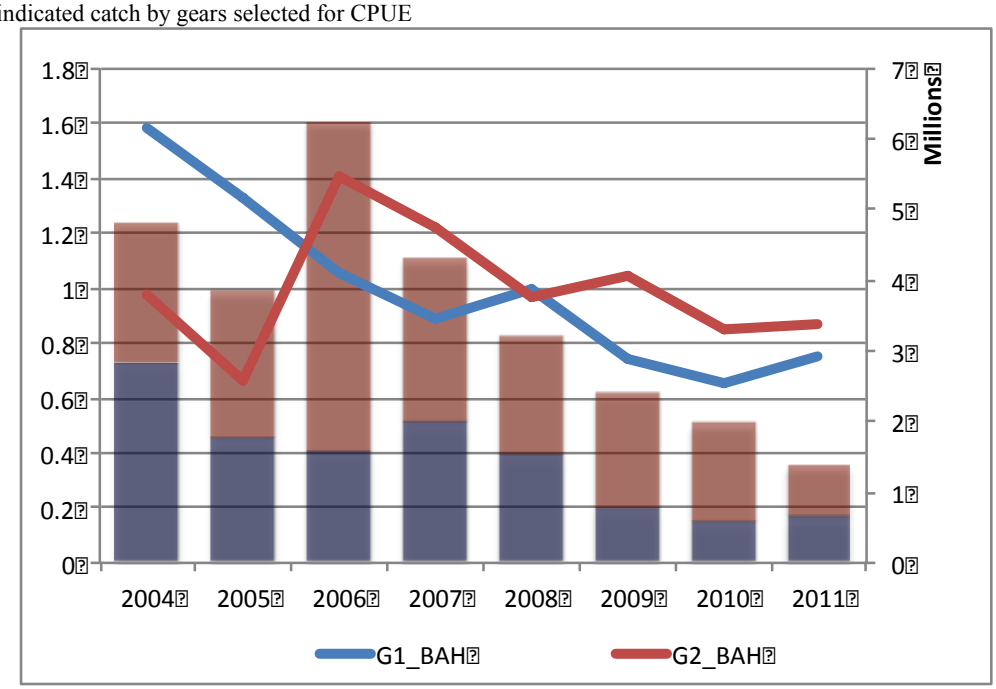


Coastal Finfish stocks:

Finfish catch in Gulf by countries
Source: RECOFI catch DB

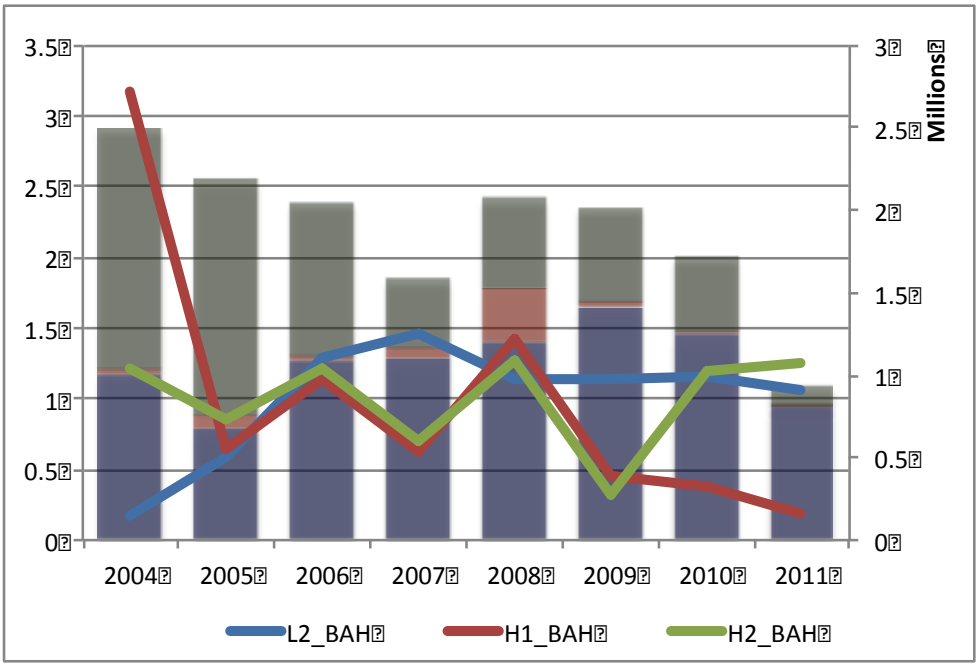


Catch and CPUE by Bahrain wire traps
Source: Min data submitted by Bahrain
Stack bar indicated catch by gears selected for CPUE



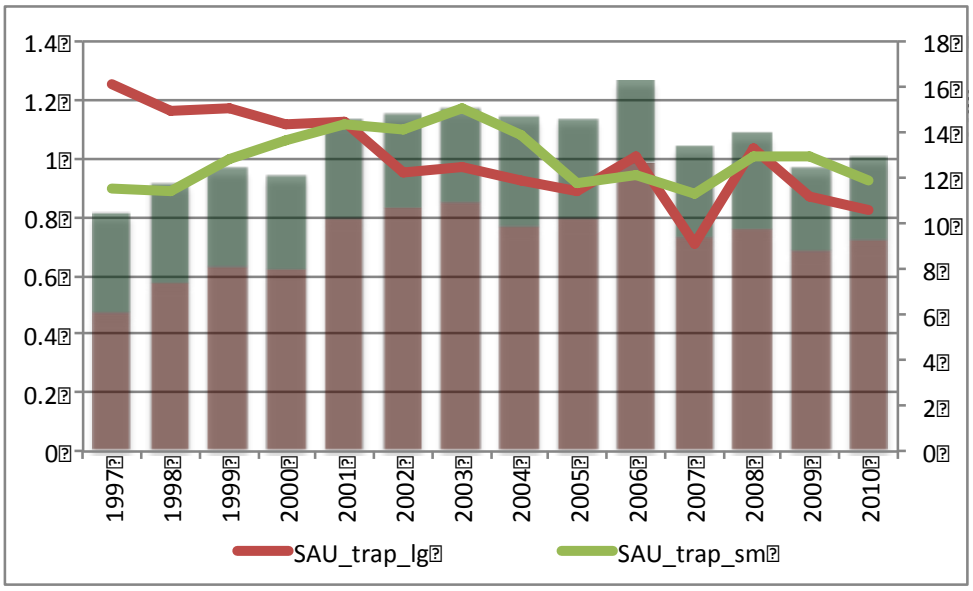
Catch and CPUE by Bahrain gillnet and hooks and lines

Source: Min data submitted by Bahrain
Stack bar indicated catch by gears selected for CPUE
L : Gillnet , H : Hooks and lines



Trap catch and CPUE by Saudi Arabia

Source: Min data submitted by Saudi Arabia
Stack bar indicated trap catch of small and large boats
Lines indicated trap CPUE in catch / trap



General observations:

- No indication of over-exploitation of shrimps that may have high level of natural fluctuation. Though, there is possibility of over fishing-capacity
- No indicator available on direct impacts of shrimp trawls on coastal finfish resources but the extent of impact may be in close linkage with efforts of shrimp trawl
- Groupers and emperors seems in the condition required immediate action to restore stock conditions
- Coastal finfish resources in general seems to be under high fishing pressure, and probably already over-exploited

Indicators with difficulties

- Spanish mackerel CPUE – due to low occurrence, high fluctuations and hard to extract signals. Need to focus on targeted gears.
- Biodiversity, species composition – different level of species disaggregation depending on time and data providers; large portion of catch reported as aggregated species group; reliability on species identification
- Impact of discards – in general, not available, and existing information with low reliability.
- Use of BRDs and their effect – in general no quantitative information available

APPENDIX J

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE RECOFI WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

1. RECOFI's WGFM fifth meeting was attended by 16 delegates from Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar, and by 12 observers. The WGFM reviewed the main outcomes of RECOFI's sixth session (Rome, Italy, 10–12 May 2011) and the WGFM's fifth meeting (Tehran, Iran [Islamic Republic of], 9–12 October 2011), updated the WGFM's programme of work and budget for the 2011–2012, reconsidered a proposal by the Sultanate of Oman on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the RECOFI region, specifically with respect to the establishment of a database of violations considered progress towards the implementation of the RECOFI recommendation on minimum data reporting, undertook a preliminary review of stock and fisheries status indicators to be produced from the RECOFI fisheries management database, considered a RECOFI scientific working group to provide scientific advice to the Commission on aquaculture and fishery management, reviewed RECOFI cooperation with the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) and considered other matters (revision and updating of the list of priority species supporting fisheries of common interest in the RECOFI area).

MAIN OUTCOMES AND DECISION

2. In relation to the workshops to be undertaken in 2012 and 2013, the WGFM agreed that the:Workshop on social and economic aspects of small-scale fisheries (February 2012): there would be merit in extending the coverage of the workshop to include industrial fisheries, as appropriate, while recognizing that a strong focus on small-scale fisheries was needed because of the importance of small-scale fishing in the RECOFI region. (paragraph 31)

Workshop to develop regional management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management (June 2012): the workshop should focus primarily on addressing the development of regional fisheries management plans. (paragraph 31)

Workshop to develop regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management: issues to be included in the terms of reference (TORs) are in Appendix 1. (paragraph 31)

Pilot joint assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and workshop on the utilization of fishery-dependent data (February 2013): the workshop's TORs should address biological parameters, distribution patterns, status of stocks, catch capacity, etc. In addition, it was stressed that a good understanding of fishing operations and regulations in force was required in order to ensure that there was an appropriate interpretation and utilization of fishery-dependent information. To facilitate consistency in reporting, the WGFM **agreed** that Members would prepare a country report prior to the workshop along the lines of a template to be provided by the Secretariat. (paragraph 31)

3. With respect to the suggested actions by the WGFM concerning the review of the regional strategy and prioritized activities, review of proposed projects in the list of projects, inclusion of additional projects and reduction in the number and scope of projects, the WGFM **agreed** that these issues should be addressed again in depth at the sixth meeting of the WGFM scheduled for October 2012. (paragraph 32)

4. Members further agreed that they should carry out a survey on the status and extent of IUU fishing in their respective countries. The delegate from the Sultanate of Oman **agreed** to draft a questionnaire that would be circulated to Members for their review and comment prior to the sixth meeting of the WGFM in Qatar in 2012. Furthermore, the WGFM **agreed** that Members would make

a brief presentation on IUU fishing in their respective countries at the sixth session of the WGFM. (paragraph 36)

5. The WGFM was advised that, at the present time, there was no standard data collection protocol to fulfil minimum data reporting requirements. Although it was recognized that Members were responsible for establishing suitable data collection and monitoring systems as well as for the quality assurance of data submitted, the WGFM **agreed** it was useful for Members to describe their data collection procedures as a means of facilitating better and more accurate interpretation and analysis of information submitted. The WGFM **agreed** that the exchange of size composition data could be deferred until such time when the utilization of this information would be reviewed and defined more clearly. (paragraph 46)

6. The delegate from the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed an interest in hosting the capture fisheries information system, similar to RAIS, as part of the main RECOFI Information Network. The Iranian delegation **agreed** to provide a proposal for such a system at the sixth meeting of the WGFM for its consideration. (paragraph 50)

7. The WGFM **agreed** that FAO would take steps towards hosting the main components of the RECOFI Information Network, including maintenance of formal document registries and the shared database, to the extent that funds permitted. (paragraph 51)

8. The WGFM recalled the general requirements for the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and the importance of defining proper operational objectives, reference points to trigger management actions and corresponding indicators to monitor the status of targets and implementation of actions. The WGFM also recognized the importance of careful analysis of basic information, including consolidated catch and efforts statistics, biology and ecology of targeted resources, operational aspects of fisheries, the relationship between possible indicators and targets, potential noises and biases, and procedures to consolidate multiple indicators to select an effective set of indicators. The WGFM **agreed** to incorporate the indicators into the TORs for the workshop to develop regional management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management. (paragraph 53)

9. The WGFM **agreed** that the proposed multidisciplinary scientific expert group would have a consultative role and would participate in strategy development for fisheries management and aquaculture. The delegate from the Islamic Republic of Iran **agreed** to draft TORs for a multidisciplinary scientific expert group that would be submitted for consideration at the sixth meeting of the WGFM in 2012. (paragraph 56)

10. The delegate from the Islamic Republic of Iran **agreed** to draft TORs for a multidisciplinary scientific expert group that would be submitted for consideration at the sixth meeting of the WGFM in 2012. In the meantime, the Secretary of RECOFI was requested to contact the Technical Secretary of the WGA, requesting that the WGA consider the establishment of such an expert group.

11. The WGFM **agreed** that species not relevant to a Member's fisheries would be removed from the FIRMS fisheries inventory. Members agreed to revise the graphs, ensuring the introduction of the three or four most important species in the catches. (paragraph 61)

12. As corporate owner of the aggregated inventory, RECOFI would ensure, in collaboration with the FIRMS Secretariat, that **agreed** conventions and harmonized rules were applied. Without RECOFI's agreement, no information under RECOFI's ownership could be published by FIRMS. (paragraph 63)

13. The WGFM **agreed** that, with the assistance of the FIRMS Secretariat, Members would develop the inventory content in an Excel template with reference to the harmonized framework (3D diagrams). During this process, any harmonization issue that could not be resolved would be recorded and the next meeting of the WGFM would examine the regionally aggregated inventory and decide on reported outstanding harmonization issues. (paragraph 64)

14. The WGFM **agreed** that FAO statistical subarea 51.3 "Western Arabian Sea" should be divided into two divisions: 51.3.1 for the Oman Sea and 51.3.2 for the Arabian Sea (South Western). The approximate limits of the two divisions were indicated and agreed on the map. The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sultanate of Oman **agreed** to provide geographic coordinates for the proposed delineation. (paragraph 70)

15. The WGFM **agreed** to revise and update the list of priority species supporting fisheries of common interest in the RECOFI area at the sixth meeting of the WGFM in 2012. (paragraph 77)

Appendix 1

Issues to be included in the terms of reference for the workshop to develop regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management

The following issues should be included:

- obtaining up-to-date information on the fisheries management systems adopted by Members;
- reviewing current fisheries management plans and management measures enforced by Members, including threats to management posed by IUU fishing;
- compiling available information in accordance with Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1, including the preliminary compilation of indicators;
- assessing the suitability and applicability of the proposed indicators;
- presenting and sharing information acquired by Members through the implementation of fishery appraisal surveys, including those recently carried out by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Iran [Islamic Republic of] and Oman in the Arabian Sea;
- taking account of the outcomes of the social and economic workshop; and
- taking due consideration of management needs from the conservation viewpoint.

APPENDIX K

Status report on RECOFI/FIRMS collaboration

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this paper document is to provide information to the sixth Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) on progress and status regarding RECOFI collaboration with the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) framework, and on the necessary elements towards a possible application of RECOFI as FIRMS Member.

BACKGROUND

2. FIRMS is an information partnership launched in 2004. It brings together 13 international organizations as members (more at http://firms.fao.org/firms and in annex 4). FAO is one of these organizations and RECOFI, as a FAO statutory body, has been invited at its WGFM5 to become part of FAO's activities in FIRMS.

3. At the Sixth Session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) (May 2011, Rome, Italy), the Commission was introduced to the FIRMS partnership during a side event. The focus of the presentation was on FIRMS' objectives, information products, benefits for a regional fisheries management organization, and its mode of operation (see meeting document). A proposal for an initial RECOFI-FIRMS workshop on a regional marine resources and fisheries inventory was agreed by the Commission.

4. The workshop took place from12–14 July 2011 in Cairo, Egypt, hosted by the FAO Regional Office for the Middle East. It was successful in developing the skeleton of an harmonized regional marine resources and fisheries inventory (see 3-d diagrams which enable participants to visually represent and position the multi-facets of fisheries and their relationships - described in the FIRMS-RECOFI workshop report). Appraising the potential benefits of the inventory approach in support to fisheries management in the RECOFI area, the participants agreed that the results of the workshop and follow-up activities should be conveyed to the Fifth WGFM meeting.

5. WGFM5 reviewed post workshop progress on inventories, agreed upon inventory related policy aspects (see annex 2), set out as priority the development of the fisheries inventory, recommended amendments to the existing FAO geo-referencing system in the RECOFI area for endorsement by CWP. Finally WGFM6 also agreed upon a roadmap towards RECOFI membership in FIRMS, including the participation of RECOFI representatives at FIRMS SC7, and the completion of draft national fisheries inventories by WGFM6.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE WGFM5

7th FIRMS Steering Committee meeting (FSC7, Rome, December 2011)

6. Two RECOFI representatives (Mr Karim Al-Radhi and Mr Tooraj Valinassab) attended FSC7. They indicated that their participation was motivated to determine if it is appropriate for RECOFI to become a FIRMS partner. They presented progress on inventories of fisheries occurring within RECOFI Iranian and Bahrainian waters. Their presence, together with CECAF, SWIOFC, SEAFDEC, and SPC, raised high in the FIRMS agenda the profile of

small scale fisheries in tropical areas, and the needs and expectations from actors in developing countries. Upon request from the RECOFI representatives for more assistance from the Secretariat for completing the inventories, the FIRMS Secretariat responded that this could be provided under the condition that additional funding can be mobilized.

7. FSC7 agreed to include the Representatives of FAO's associate partners (CECAF, RECOFI and SWIOFC) as members of the FIRMS' Technical Working Groups. RECOFI did actually contribute to the two virtual TWG meetings held in 2012.

Development of fisheries inventories and their uploading in FIRMS

8. The draft inventories of Bahrainian and Iranian fisheries presented at FSC7 have been completed during the course of 2012 through close collaboration with the FIRMS Secretariat. These inventories containing respectively 15 fisheries for Iran and 26 for Bahrain have been uploaded in the FIRMS system and are ready for publishing.

9. In parallel, the RECOFI and FIRMS Secretariats have reiterated the call for the presentation of draft fisheries inventories by all RECOFI members at WGFM6.

Specification of the boundary line between the proposed new divisions 51.3.1 and 51.3.2.

10. WGFM5 agreed that the FAO statistical sub-area 51.3 "Western Arabian Sea" should be divided into two divisions: 51.3.1 for the Oman Sea, and 51.3.2 for the Arabian Sea (South Western). The approximate limits of the two divisions were visualized and agreed on the map, and Iran and Oman agreed to provide geographic coordinates for this delineation. Following these recommendations, Mr Valinassab (Iran) in consultation with Mr Al Siyabi (Oman) and FIRMS Secretariat proposed the coordinates and logic for drawing the dividing line, as reflected in Annex 3.

ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION STATUS TOWARDS A FORMAL PARTICIPATION OF RECOFI IN FIRMS

11. The roadmap agreed upon at WGFM5 towards applying as formal member in FIRMS was:

- By WGFM6:
    a. a participation of RECOFI at FSC7,
    b. at least three fisheries inventories uploaded in FIRMS system,
    c. all national inventories of fisheries should be available in draft form (Excel template) for aggregation in a regional inventory.

- At WGFM6:
    a. a review of the outcome of the above actions, for a WGFM6 recommendation to RECOFI Commission regarding such application as full-fledged FIRMS member.

ACTIONS REQUESTED FROM WGFM6

12. WGFM6 is invited to:

- Consider the report from the RECOFI representatives who participated to FSC7 and the two subsequent TWG sessions, on any relevant information regarding benefits and application of RECOFI to a full membership in FIRMS.
- Review the inventories of Bahrainian and Iranian fisheries as available in the FIRMS system[1], as well as the draft inventories prepared by the other countries; provide guidance on additional information services (such as synopsis of management measures) which FIRMS could deliver to better serve the needs in the region.
- Make decision on publishing of the RECOFI fisheries inventory in FIRMS.
- Consider whether any progress can be achieved regarding the inventory of RECOFI marine resources, with reference to scientific activities which have been held since WGFM5 in the region regarding stock definitions, stock assessment results and stock status information
- Validate the draft proposal for "Request from RECOFI Secretariat to CWP for formal endorsement of proposed splitting of FAO subarea 51.3 into divisions 51.3.1 and 51.3.2 (see annex 3)

- Finally the WG is invited to make recommendations to the 2013 RECOFI Commission meeting regarding a possible application to FIRMS as a full member.

13. In this respect, the WGFM is informed of the "Benefits and obligations for RECOFI Member States in FIRMS" (Annex 1), and of the "Policy aspects regarding management of RECOFI fisheries and resources inventories in FIRMS" (Annex 2).

[1] Access is restricted and members are invited to ask for user credential at FIRMS-secretariat@fao.org

Annex 1

Benefits and obligations for RECOFI Member States in FIRMS

1. Anticipated benefits

RECOFI6 and WGFM5 have recognized that the involvement of RECOFI in FIRMS could enhance Members visibility in the international arena regarding their efforts to promote sound and more responsible fisheries management, the FIRMS initiative providing one of such opportunities.

At a political level:

FAO member countries through COFI, and UN members through the UN General Assembly, have made commitments to the Strategy-STF[2] and their willingness to adhere to principles of good fisheries governance based on the best scientific knowledge available. Reporting status and trends of resources and fisheries demonstrates countries' compliance with such commitment, and FIRMS offers an enabling framework.

As well, the 2006 UN Review Conference on Straddling and highly migratory Fish Stocks recommended that States individually or collectively through RFMOs should cooperate with FAO in the implementation and further development of the Fisheries Resources Monitoring System (par. 18j)"

At a strategic level:

Although the Partnership has not yet been open to National partners, FSC5 agreed that national level reporting can be channelled and encouraged through relevant FIRMS RFB members. These national level contributions are accepted provided some peer review process and quality assurance rules are applied at RFB level. Such process has already been initiated with CECAF, GFCM, SWIOFC, SEAFDEC. Therefore there is scope for RFBs to combine national level reporting required as part of the regional mechanisms, and FIRMS reporting.

FIRMS RFB partners have understood the benefits of FIRMS reporting mechanisms. Fact sheets are multi-purpose communication products:

- The FIRMS fact sheets primarily serve data owners needs. FIRMS offers a technology which enables the Partner to "recycle" in its own website the fact sheets which it contributed to FIRMS. GFCM[3] has already implemented this facility and others are following.

Additionally, Fact sheets are communication products which:

- provide overviews and contribute to convey the essential information for fishery management or policy making; full details are accessible through link to electronic sources;
- allow better searchability on the internet including through full text and controlled terms; a presence in FIRMS increases the profile of RFB reports, as well as the visibility of their work on the internet;

[2] FAO Strategy-STF: FAO strategy for improving information on status and trends of capture fisheries
[3] see www.gfcm.org/gfcm/topic/17104/en

- can be merged and enriched with other sources of information such as catch statistics, or multidisciplinary maps;
- constitute a dynamic reporting featuring ability to maintain time series of reports as information becomes available;
- enable the development of new products, such as maps, statistics, or synoptic views (eg Status and Trends summaries)

2. Obligations of RECOFI as FIRMS member

By becoming a FIRMS member, RECOFI will have to fulfil its commitments, at its own expenses:

- contribute to FIRMS information on fisheries and/or resources status and trends as per the signed Annex 2 of the FIRMS partnership arrangement[4];
- participate to the FIRMS decision making process, by regularly attending FIRMS Steering Committee meetings (these meetings are generally organized back to back with CWP meeting, on average once every 1.5 year),
- participate to the FIRMS Technical Working Group meetings, which now meet virtually twice a year through video-conferencing, and can exceptionally hold physical meetings.

[4] FIRMS partnership arrangement: http://firms.fao.org/firms/about/en#Org-LegalFoundation

Annex 2

Policy aspects regarding management of RECOFI fisheries and resources inventories in FIRMS

1. FIRMS general information management policy aspects

FIRMS is an information partnership framework that implements principles of best scientific evidence and of transparency promoted by the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the FAO Strategy for improving information on the status and trends of capture fisheries (Strategy-STF). A fundamental FIRMS rule is however that the information contribution and publishing process is under the control of partners. As a FIRMS partner, RECOFI would decide what information it commits to regularly contribute (to be defined in Annex 2 of the FIRMS Partnership arrangement) as well as which content and when is actually published.

2. Additional Policy principles agreed within RECOFI

More specifically, the following policy aspects have been agreed upon within RECOFI at WGFM5. There is a necessary distinction between the Fisheries inventory, and the Marine resources inventory, both in terms of primary ownership and development priority:

- Primary ownership of the fisheries inventory lies with countries, while that of the marine resources inventory lies with RECOFI. In both cases, RECOFI retains the corporate ownership and as such decision making responsibility regarding publishing in FIRMS.
- In the RECOFI context, first priority should be for the development of the fisheries inventory, while the Marine resources inventory should develop consistently with the findings of regional scientific working groups.

Fisheries inventory:

- Primary and Corporate ownership: the inventories of fisheries developed at national level will eventually be aggregated at regional level according to the harmonized framework. Accordingly the countries retain primary ownership (and control) over the content which they supply while RECOFI, as corporate owner of the aggregated inventory, ensures in close collaboration with the FIRMS Secretariat that agreed conventions and harmonization rules are applied. Without RFBs' sign-off of information under their corporate ownership, no information can be published in FIRMS.
- The inventories harmonization process at RECOFI level will be achieved as follows: national delegates will develop the inventory content through the FIRMS excel template, while referring to the harmonized framework set out by FIRMS-RECOFI workshop (3-d diagrams). During this process, any harmonization issue which cannot be resolved will be recorded. The next meeting of WGFM will examine the regionally aggregated inventory, and discuss and make decisions on the reported outstanding harmonization issues.
- The decision making process for publishing the RECOFI inventory in FIRMS: a successful outcome of the procedure described in the above paragraph will allow RECOFI to proceed with such publication. A regional inventory aggregating a minimum of three to four countries was deemed acceptable for such decision.

Marine resources inventory:

- Unlike the fisheries inventory, the primary (and corporate) ownership of the Marine resources inventory lies with RECOFI. In this respect, the regional priority is for developing an inventory focusing on the priority species. Countries are encouraged to seek inputs from competent biologists' scientists in order to compile scientific knowledge regarding those priority species. Opportunities such as "Working group on Spanish mackerel" should be taken for consolidating subsets of it.
- The FIRMS Marine resources inventory template is available as an "information collection mechanism" which countries are encouraged to use for compiling information about any additional species in the regional inventory. These nationally contributed inventories will be used, amongst others, as sources for decision making regarding the inclusion of more species in the priority list.

Translation in Persian and Arabic:

- FIRMS can disseminate the material related to the inventories in Arabic and Persian, provided guidelines, controlled terms and labels are translated. RECOFI would have to support the translation of these assets.

Amendments to the existing FAO geo-referencing system in the RECOFI area:

- FAO statistical sub-area 51.3 "Western Arabian Sea" should be divided into two divisions: 51.3.1 for the Oman Sea, and 51.3.2 for the Arabian Sea (South Western). This modification request is to be transmitted by the RECOFI Secretariat to the CWP Secretariat for formal endorsement by CWP, including specification of the limit between the two new divisions, the proposed codes and names, and the rational for their creation.

Annex 3

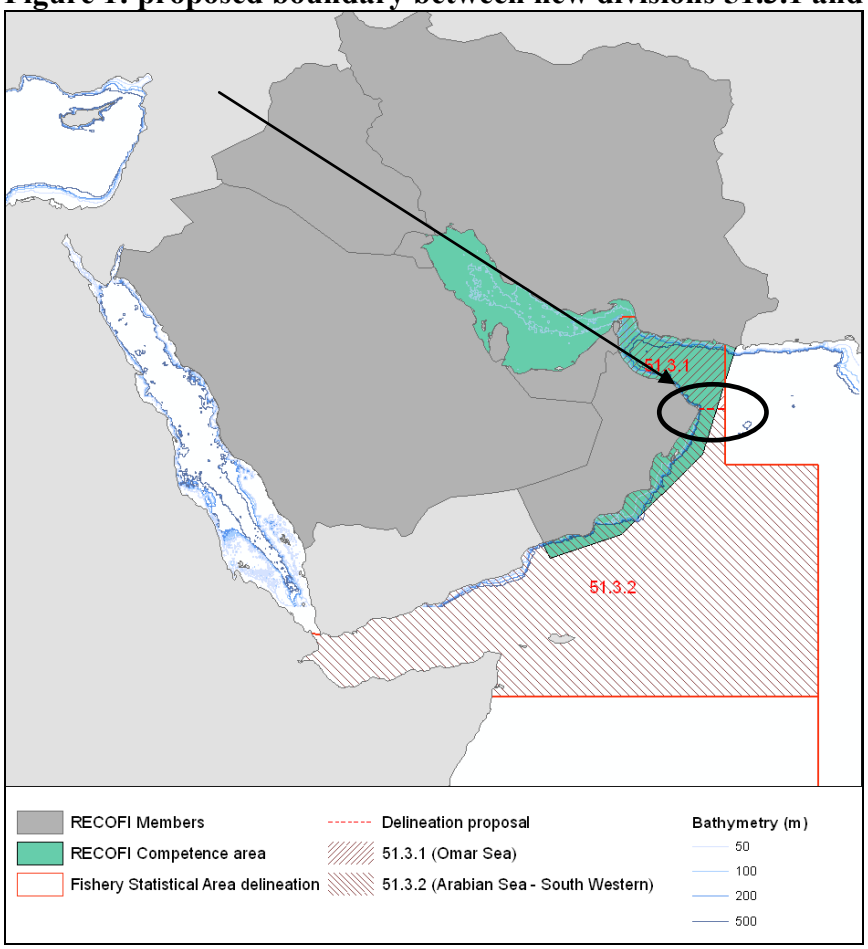
Draft proposal for "Request from RECOFI Secretariat to CWP for formal endorsement of proposed splitting of FAO subarea 51.3 into divisions 51.3.1 and 51.3.2

In order to properly geo-reference marine resources and fisheries in the RECOFI area, and in particular for distinguishing the fisheries operating in the Oman Sea, and those operating in the south Western part of the Arabian Sea, RECOFI fifth WGFM (Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of) 9-12 October 2011) agreed that FAO statistical subarea 51.3 "Western Arabian Sea" should be divided into two divisions:

- 51.3.1 - Oman Sea, and
- 51.3.2 - Arabian Sea (South Western).

WGFM6 validated the specification of the limit between the two new divisions. The dividing line is set as follows (See figure 1):
"a horizontal line passing through the point Latitude 22 26N and Longitude 59 50E which determines in the Rasol - Had region the coastal border between the Oman Sea and the Arabian Sea, and extending eastward up to the vertical limit of FAO sub-areas 51.3 and 51.4"

Figure 1: proposed boundary between new divisions 51.3.1 and 51.3.2



Source: FAO - FIPS

Annex 4

Current FIRMS membership

FIRMS partners

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)
Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)
European Union (EU) - Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) - Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI)
General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)
Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)
Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC)
South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO)

FIRMS observers

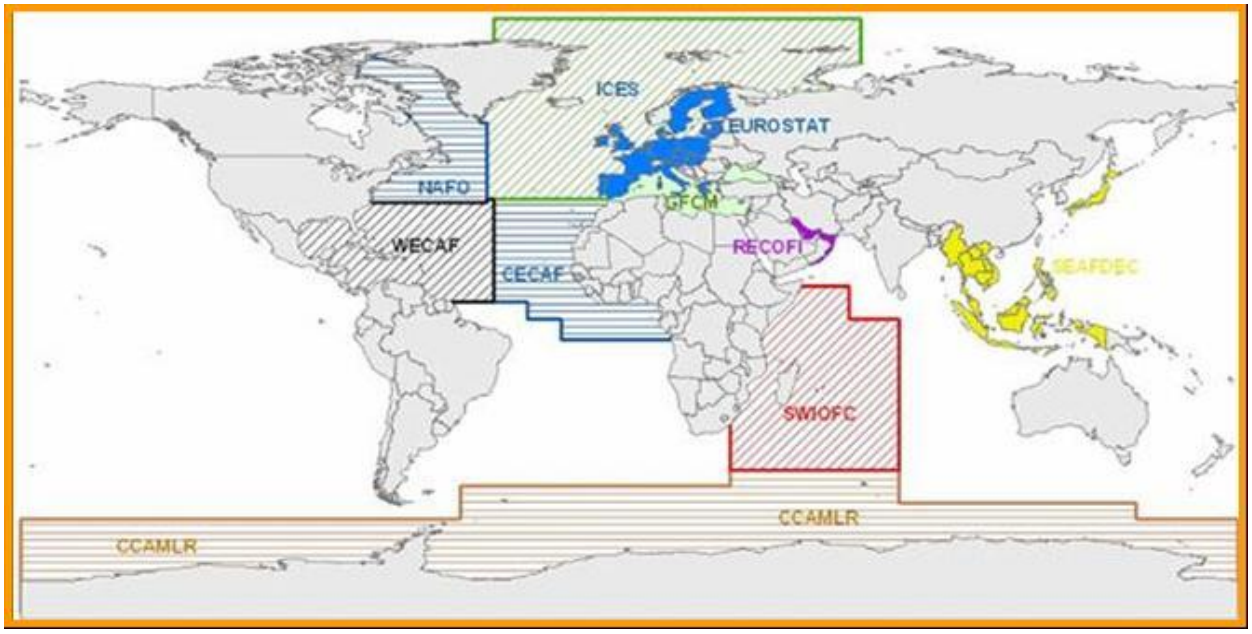
Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)
International Whaling Commission (IWC)
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

Other organizations which participated in FIRMS Steering Committee meetings

North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)
South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)

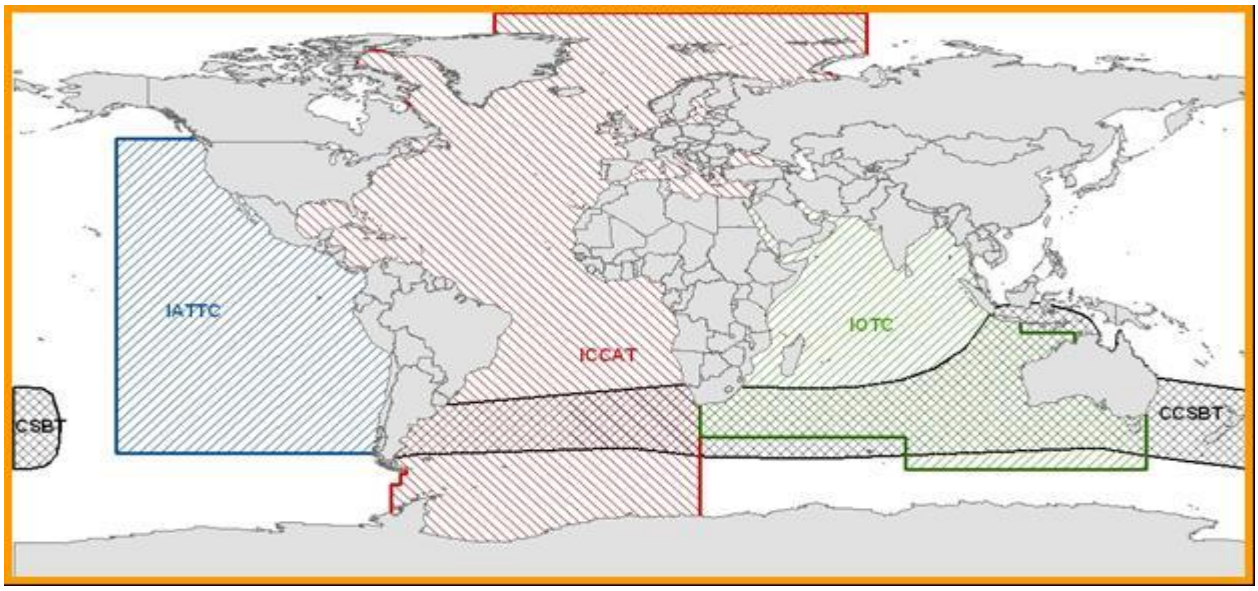
Figure 1: FIRMS membership - Area and species coverage

Figure 1a: current list of non tuna-RFBs contributing information to FIRMS



Source: FAO - FIPS

Figure 1b: current list of tuna-RFBs contributing information to FIRMS



Source: FAO - FIPS

APPENDIX L

List of RECOFI focal points for FIRMS

Member country	Focal Point	Email	Phone number
Kuwait	Youssef Khalifa AlNajm	Yousef-alnajem@hotmail.com	
Oman	Yaqoob Al Jabri		
Saudi Arabia	Waleed Khalid Krimly	Waleed56@gmail.com	
UAE	Algergawi Ashraf		
Qatar	Dr. Mohamed Abdallah	mohamed.abdallah@gmail.com	+974 55569085
Bahrain	Abdulkarim Al-Radhi	Radhi58@hotmail.com aradhi@pmew.gov.bh	
Iran	Tooraj Valinassab	valinassab@yahoo.com	

APPENDIX M

Main outcomes of the Near East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

INTRODUCTION

1. The Near East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on *Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fishing and Social Development* was held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, from 26 to 28 March 2012. It was jointly organized by FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Wealth, Sultanate of Oman. The workshop was attended by over 30 participants representing governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from 17 countries. Staff from FAO headquarters, regional and subregional offices, and projects participated as resource persons.

2. The workshop was convened to allow for the sharing of policies and practices in support of small-scale fisheries in the region and thereby contribute to the small-scale fisheries (SSF) Guidelines, currently under development by the FAO Secretariat in close collaboration with its partners.

WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS

3. The following summary of discussions and key findings was adopted by workshop participants on 28 March 2012.

4. The workshop confirmed the importance of small-scale fisheries in the region as a contributor to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security, and socio-economic development, and that the SSF Guidelines will be an important tool for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries governance and development.

5. In this context, the workshop recognized that:

- Small-scale fisheries in the region are characterized by great diversity between subregions and countries with regard to, for example, the type and numbers of actors involved, the production and market structures and the resources and means of the sector.
- Many countries are currently going through a period of transition which may have implications also for the small-scale fisheries sector.
- There is a need to promote small-scale fisheries and secure their access to the resources necessary for sustainable livelihoods. Small-scale fisheries often represent traditional values and a way of life. Achieving sustainable governance and development of the sector will require concerted efforts, including organizational development and strengthening of capacities at all levels.

6. Four working groups discussed the topics of (i) governance of access to resources, resource management and stewardship, (ii) social and economic development and achieving equity and equality, (iii) disaster risk management and climate change and (iv) policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration. The two last working groups also integrated aspects of research, information and capacity needs.

7. The following main conclusions were arrived at by the groups:

(i) Governance of access to resources, resource management and stewardship

- There is concern in the region with regard to overfishing and ecosystem health and there is a need for improved fisheries management. This should be based on participatory approaches and informed by the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and latest available science.
- Small-scale fisheries communities need secure access to both fishery resources and land for their livelihoods.
- Data are generally lacking and efforts are required for improving data collection and analysis. Fishing communities need to collaborate with governments to ensure reliable and regular data for management.
- There is a need for increased attention, including monitoring mechanisms, to prevent and eliminate IUU fishing and to address overcapacity in the large-scale fisheries sector that contributes to intensive fishing and thus allow for sustainable small-scale fisheries.
- Education and training of fishers are needed on various aspects of fisheries including safety measures.

(ii) Social and economic development and achieving equity and equality

- The small-scale fisheries postharvest sector is an important part of the fishery system. Constraints faced by the sector include lack of adequate infrastructure, competition and market access.
- Small-scale fisheries communities often have inadequate access to health, education and social services. Social security needs to be adapted to the particular circumstances of small-scale fisheries taking into account, for example, part time activities.
- There is a need to take into consideration people under conflict and occupation among vulnerable groups.
- In some cases, support to developing alternative livelihood activities could be needed but when small-scale fishers and fish workers want to continue in their profession this wish should be respected and adequately recognized in fisheries management regimes.
- Women are mainly involved in the postharvest sector. Attention should be given to gender, considering the roles of both men and women.
- The difference between child work and child labour needs to be better understood and child labour adequately addressed to avoid detrimental impact on the physical and mental development of children who are the future of society.

(iii) Disaster risk management from natural and man-made events and climate change

- Small-scale fisheries need to be included in contingency planning and crisis response as well as in the League of Arab States disaster risk reduction strategy and regional and national climate change policies and plans. Timely access to funding is also essential.
- Efforts should be made to increase the awareness among small-scale fisheries communities about climate change and their abilities to adapt by using adequate means and tools.
- Improved data and information are needed on disaster risks and climate change with respect to fishing, communities, and ecological and environmental aspects. Data should be analyzed, disseminated and used (for decision-making). Local and traditional knowledge should be utilized and the communication between governments and small-scale fisheries communities need to be improved.
- There is a need to address growing threats from man-made disasters, including piracy in the region that causes a constant threat to the livelihoods of fishing communities forcing fishers to stay in inshore waters and thereby further increasing fishing pressure on already heavily exploited fishery resources.

(iv) Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration

- The small-scale fisheries sector is impacted by developments in other sectors and under threat of several adverse influences including in particular pollution. Better cross-sectoral coordination and policy coherence are needed – at national and regional levels – avoiding contradictory objectives.
- The involvement of all stakeholders, including in particular small-scale fisheries communities, in policy and decision-making processes is essential. Improved coordination among CSOs is also required.
- The small-scale fisheries sector needs to be included in national development policies and plans. Such plans should also take the sustainability of resources into consideration.

  The workshop also suggested the following:
- The organization of a workshop, including both governments and the CSO community, on special needs of vulnerable groups in the small-scale fisheries sector focusing on issues such as gender, youth employment and child labour (a CSO of Tunisia offered to host such an event).
- The organization of additional consultation meetings at subregional and national level to increase the awareness of the need for sustainable governance and development of the small-scale fisheries sector and to provide inputs into the SSF Guidelines development process. Regional and national stakeholders are encouraged to take the initiative for organising such events, including identifying the necessary funding.
- Discussions on the small-scale fisheries sector and the SSF Guidelines should be included in the agenda of relevant regional organizations. Other channels to increase the awareness of the importance of small-scale fisheries, such as public media and networking, should also be used.
- Both governments and the CSO community of the region should ensure that they take an active role in discussions in international fora on the issue of small-scale fisheries. Increased experience sharing, within the region and internationally, is needed.

8. It was felt that the workshop had constituted an important opportunity to discuss the issue of small-scale fisheries among both governments and CSOs. This was much appreciated and it was hoped that this participatory and collaborative process will be continued.

APPENDIX N

Status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved Working Group on Fisheries Management work plan

INTRODUCTION

1. The Special Meeting on RECOFI Consolidation and Development was convened as a follow-up to the Fifth Session of RECOFI held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 12 to 14 May 2009. The Special Meeting was convened to consider ways and means to enhance the role of RECOFI as a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO). The main findings and conclusion of the meeting including those of the technical performance review carried out in preparation of the Special Meeting were discussed and endorsed by Commission at the sixth session which was held in Rome, 10–12 May 2011.

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

2. A number of pertinent issues were highlighted in the technical review including with specific reference to RECOFI finance and funding that:

- the Commission was heavily reliant on FAO services, both financial and in kind;
- Members lacked the financial and human resources to maximize benefits for the initiatives already being undertaken by the Commission;
- weaknesses in raising financial resources to support RECOFI's activities required attention; and
- a new vision was required to guide the Commission.

3. The Special Meeting expressed considerable concern regarding the lack of follow-up and implementation of decisions and recommendations from technical meetings convened by the Commission. Reasons for this lack of follow-up were identified and it was agreed that RECOFI should be involved in assisting Members in implementing decisions. However, it was recognized that such a role had financial implications and that funding would need to be secured if activities to support the implementation of Commission decisions were to be undertaken.

4. There is a particularly significant difference between Members' contributions and the total expenses of the Commission. For instance, in the 2008-2009 period, the actual total working costs related to RECOFI activities were USD 557 459.91, including the cost of FAO staff members (technical support and travel costs) supporting the Commission. The latter cost was about seven times greater than the total national Members' contributions over the same period (USD 80 000). FAO contributions over the same period represented 73.61 percent of financial commitments. If the Commission was to be fully autonomous and financially self-supporting, Members' annual contributions would need to rise. The independent consultant estimated the rise to be approximately USD35 000 per country per year, as a minimum.

5. Looking to the future, three scenarios were presented with respect to financing the Commission:

- status quo of equal payment with upward adjustment of annual contributions;
- maintaining the principle of equal and compulsory minimum contribution supplemented by extra-budgetary contributions by Members on a voluntary basis; and
- replacing equal payments with indexed contributions based on a variety of variables.

6. Moreover and besides the three aforementioned scenarios, other options could be identified also and taken into consideration. It was highlighted that there were two different financial means to support the Commission:

- directly through agreed contributions by Members and,

- indirectly and additionally through extra-budgetary funding of field projects (national or regional).

7. With reference to the very significant financial contribution that FAO has provided to RECOFI during the last years, it should be noted that this level of support could not be continued indefinitely, given the financial constraints faced by FAO.

8. The Special Meeting agreed to make three broad recommendations in relation to the future technical and institutional work of RECOFI and its financial needs. With reference to the latter, the Special Meeting recognized that RECOFI's financial needs, including the level of Members' contributions, depended on the work programme agreed by the Commission. It was also recognized that the current contribution level (USD5 000 per year) was quite inadequate, particularly when the amount of arrears were taken into account. After having assessed and agreed on the Commission's technical and institutional requirements to address fisheries and aquaculture issues in the region, RECOFI should determine how the work programme would be funded. The Commission's core functions and activities should be covered at least by Member contributions while other activities of a project nature could be funded by extra-budgetary funding.

9. The Commission at the sixth session in May 2011 welcomed the programme of work and budget for 2011–2012. It was anticipated by the Secretariat that approximately USD 150 000 would be available for all RECOFI activities over the biennium should yearly contributions be timely released and all arrears settled. Members noted that the WGA and WGFM had proposed a robust list of activities totalling USD540 000.

10. The Commission agreed that the current level of Members' contributions was only sufficient to fund the implementation of a limited number of priority activities, as identified by the WGA and WGFM. Additional funds would be required if a more ambitious work programme was to be implemented. The Commission agreed on the need to significantly reduce the number of activities.

11. In considering options proposed by the review to consolidate and develop RECOFI, the Commission agreed to continue applying fixed and equal contribution for Members. Commencing in 2013, the Commission agreed that the annual Member's contribution would be increased to USD15 000. This level was established on the condition that current and outstanding contributions would be settled not later than 31 December 2011. Regrettably this did not happen as the Secretariat reported to Members on the status of arrears in early 2012.

12. RECOFI Member countries each contribute USD5 000/year. The core budget of RECOFI takes the form of a multi-lateral trust-fund project under the FAO symbol MTF/REM/001/MUL and title "Support to the Secretariat of RECOFI". The project began in April 2003 and since then has been renewed on a yearly basis. Its budget is revised regularly in order to monitor annual contributions by Member countries and the cash flow of expenditures. The book-keeping activity continued to be ensured through the FAO central accounting system (based on Oracle).

13. Table 1 below provides an overview of the financial statement of the Commission's budget since 2003 and as of August 31, 2012[1], and the liquidation of total expenses as of August 31, 2012. Total expenses (USD403 847) include expenses settled to the end of August 2012 (USD347 945), existing commitments (USD9 000) made until the end of December 2012 and a provision of USD20 000 earmarked as a forecast for the cost of the Seventh RECOFI session (interpretation, in-session translation of draft report, travel, printing and miscellaneous).

[1] Funds deposited for the implementation of the Aquaculture Legal and Policy Framework Project are also included.

Table 1: Financial status in US Dollars (2003–August 2012)

Income (contributions)	**419 847**
Total expenses	**403 847**
Expenses (*up to end August 2012*)	374 945
Commitments (*2012*)	9 000
Forecast (*2013 – 7th session*)	20 000
Balance	**16 000**

14. Because of inadequate funding, the organization of the RECOFI Workshop on "Spatial Planning Development Programme for Marine Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture" (Cairo, Egypt, 25–27 November 2012) and regional workshop on Bycatch Management and Low Impact Fishing (Kuwait, 9–12 December 2012) was possible thanks to additional resources (approx USD60 000) that the Secretariat succeeded to obtain from the FAO Regular Programme funds.

APPENDIX O

Update of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2013–2014 for the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management

BACKGROUND

1. The fifth meeting of RECOFI's WGFM was held in Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), from 9 to 12 October 2011. *Inter alia*, the Working Group addressed the Regional Strategy and Prioritized Activities for Regional Fisheries Management, the implementation of approved WGFM projects, and the impact of inadequate funding on the WGFM programme of work.

2. The purpose of this document is to review and update, as appropriate, (i) the Regional Strategy and Prioritized Activities for Regional Fisheries Management, (ii) progress with the implementation of approved activities by the WGFM, and determine priority projects for implementation during 2012–2013.

3. The draft RECOFI Regional Strategy and Priorities for Regional Fisheries Management, including a workplan for 2012–2013, is in Appendix 1.

REVIEW OF REGIONAL STRATEGY AND PRIORITIZED ACTIVITIES FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED PROJECTS

Regional strategy and prioritized regional activities for regional fisheries management

4. The framework Regional Strategy was streamlined at the fifth WGFM meeting (2011). It was considered that the Regional Strategy remained relevant to the fisheries conservation and management needs of RECOFI Members.

5. There are five prioritized objectives underpinning the WGFM's activities, as agreed by the Working Group, are to:

- Implement effective fisheries management through regional cooperation and harmonization, including share stocks and fisheries of common interest, based on the ecosystem approach;
- Facilitate human resource development and institutional strengthening to ensure the capacity to implement sustainable fisheries;
- Promote legal discussion and review and revise fisheries legislation for harmonizing fisheries management, reflecting international instruments;
- Reflect social values and economic considerations in small-scale fisheries; and
- Coordinate and promote information exchange and fish trade in the RECOFI area.

These objectives are compact, yet comprehensive, reflecting the scope and broad areas of fisheries management and governance work that RECOFI Members wish to pursue.

6. Appendix 1 shows the prioritized objectives, prioritized regional activities, regional projects, indicative costs, ranking and major outputs. The projects approved for implementation at the WGFM fifth meeting have been deleted from the Appendix 1 and are reflected in Appendix 2.

7. The WGFM should note that prioritized objective number 4 (social values and economic considerations in small-scale fisheries) currently has no project attached to it. In keeping with past practice unless a project(s) is/are developed for implementation, the prioritized objective should be deleted at the sixth WGFM meeting.

IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED WGFM PROJECTS

8. Appendix 2 shows the regional projects that were approved to be undertaken in the 2011–2012 period and their implementation stati.

9. RECOFI (2011) gave highest priority to the funding of a joint Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA)/WGFM project on capacity development for spatial planning and management (RECOFI Technical Workshop on Spatial Planning for Marine Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture). It is the only jointly implemented activity and an ongoing commitment. It will be held in Cairo, Egypt from 25 to 27 November 2012.[1]

10. In addition to the joint project, RECOFI approved, four WGFM projects, in order of priority. These were :

a) a preparatory exercise for the implementation of minimum data reporting and establishment of a regional database and information network to support management of major fisheries. This work underpins the implementation of the mandatory Resolution RECOFI/6/2011/1 entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area". The Resolution took effect on 1 January 2012 (see document RECOFI: WGFM6/2012/4). Information provided by RECOFI Members will be analysed and presented at the sixth WGFM meeting.
b) a workshop to develop regional management plans with agreed operational objectives and conservation measures for fisheries management. This workshop will be held within the structure of the sixth meeting of the WGFM.
c) a pilot joint-assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and a workshop on the utilization of fishery dependent data. This implementation of this workshop has been delayed because of a lack of funds but will be undertaken if funds become available.
d) a workshop on social and economic aspects of small-scale fisheries that was held in Bahrain in April 2012 (see document RECOFI: WGFM6/2012/3); and
e) a regional workshop on bycatch reduction and management and evaluation and promotion of options of gear types with lower ecosystem impacts. This workshop will be undertaken in Kuwait from 9–12 December 2012. It will be funded by RNE.

11. By the end of the 2011–2012 biennium the WGFM will have made reasonable progress with the implementation of the projects requested by the last RECOFI session. However, a lack of funds had handicapped the implementation of a pilot joint-assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and a workshop on the utilization of fishery dependent data. This is an issue beyond the Secretariat's control.

12. Looking forward, the Secretariat proposes that the WGFM review Appendix 1, updating it as appropriate, for the 2013–2014 biennium.

[1]The products of the workshop will be a draft proposal of a regional spatial planning development programme outline including preliminary budget estimates that will either require extra-budgetary funding, thus for consideration at the next RECOFI session in May 2013, and/or may be funded independently by single RECOFI Member countries, and a regional workshop report.

Appendix 1

Draft RECOFI Regional Strategy and Priorities for Regional Fisheries Management, including a workplan: 2011–2012

STRATEGY: Achieve sound and effective regional fisheries governance by:

- ensuring that fisheries are exploited and utilized in a responsible and long-term sustainable manner;
- ensuring that fisheries generate maximum social and economic benefits for RECOFI countries; and
- ensuring that ecosystem considerations are incorporated into conservation and management decisions.

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT RANKING	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
1. To implement effective fisheries management through regional cooperation and harmonization, including shared stocks and fisheries of common interest, based on the ecosystem approach	Development and implementation of information systems to support regional fisheries management plans	Review of national fisheries monitoring programmes	40 000 (Source: TBI)	8	Enhanced national fisheries monitoring programmes to support sustainable fisheries management
		Pilot joint assessment of ecosystem impact of shrimp fisheries	30 000 (Source: TBI)	7	Recommendations and options for assessing ecosystem impacts of shrimp fisheries
	Implementation of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), including vessel monitoring systems	Project to implement regionally VMS: phase 1 to ascertain feasibility	30 000 (Source: TBI)	14	Report with recommendations and options concerning the implementation of regional VMS
		Annual regional meeting of MCS officers to exchange information of common interest and consider the possibility of promoting a harmonized MCS approach	15 000 (Source: TBI)	13	Strengthened approach to addressing regional MCS problems through enhanced cooperation and harmonization of activities
	Implementation of measures against illegal, IUU fishing including port States measures and flag State performance criteria	Feasibility study to review development of regional databases of violations, establish a list of vessels authorized to fish by Members and the establishment of an MCS information exchange scheme (refer to FAO/ INFOSAMAK priorities)	30 000 (Source: TBI)	10	Options and recommendations to address IUU fishing in a more comprehensive and effective manner

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT RANKING	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
	Promotion of bycatch reduction in support of improved utilization	A study to evaluate and promote options to improve utilization of bycatch	15 000 (Source: TBI)	15	Reduced bycatch in fisheries
2. To facilitate human resource development and institutional strengthening to ensure the capacity to implement sustainable fisheries	Workshops, country attachments and other training opportunities to enhance human resource development	Applied training programme for fish data collectors for the identification of priority species	25 000 (Source: TBI)	4	Fish data collectors capable of identifying priority species
3. To promote legal discussion and review and revise fisheries legislation for harmonizing fisheries management, reflecting international instruments	Promotion of the acceptance and implementation of international instruments and harmonization of fisheries laws among Members	Comparative analysis of certain legal issues to promote further harmonization of legislation, building on initial work undertaken by RECOFI and taking into consideration other relevant work	20 000 (Source: TBI)	5	Enhanced understanding of requirements to promote greater harmonization of legislation to support regional approaches to fisheries management
4. To reflect social values and economic consideration in small-scale fisheries					

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT RANKING	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
5. To coordinate and promote information exchange and fish trade in the RECOFI Area	Promote better cooperation in regional fish trade including consideration of regional standards for fish exports and imports	Evaluation of certification and related schemes to be investigated together with the relationship between IUU fishing and trade and the estimated value of IUU fishing in the region	20 000 (Source: TBI)	12	Enhanced understanding of impacts of certification and related schemes Assessment of the effects of IUU fishing on trade Estimation of the value of IUU fishing in the region
		Workshop to consider regional standards for fish exports and imports as a means of promoting better cooperation and trade	15 000 (Source: TBI)	11	More rigorous standards for fish exports and imports

Appendix 2

RECOFI regional projects to be undertaken in the 2011–2012 intersessional period and implementation status

Working Group	Regional projects	Dates	Locations	Duration (days)	Indicative RECOFI cost (USD)	Status (priority approved by RECOFI)	Status of Implementation (10 September 2012)
Joint (with RECOFI WGA)	RECOFI Regional Spatial Planning Development Programme for Marine Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture	25–27 November 2012	Cairo, Egypt	3	25 000	Approved	The survey questionnaire for the spatial planning the workshop were sent out in July 2012. International consultants started analyzing survey responses in September 2012 and will draft a document entitled "Regional Spatial Planning Development Programme for Marine Capture Fisheries and Aquaculture" to be discussed and completed at the workshop.
WGFM	Preparatory exercise for implementation of minimum data requirements and establishment of a regional database and information network to support management of major fisheries	Ongoing until mid-2012	N/A	N/A	20 000	Approved. WGFM priority number 1	Analysis of the information provided by RECOFI Members will be provided to the sixth RECOFI meeting.
WGFM	Workshop to develop regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management	June 2012	United Arab, Emirates	3–4	15 000	Approved. WGFM priority number 2	Workshop will be held within the framework of the sixth RECOFI meeting. Its outcomes will be reflected in the report of the meeting.

Working Group	Regional projects	Dates	Locations	Duration (days)	Indicative RECOFI cost (USD)	Status (priority approved by RECOFI)	Status of Implementation (10 September 2012)
WGFM	Pilot joint assessment of narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and workshop on the utilization of fishery-dependent data	February 2013	Muscat, Oman	4	30 000	Approved. WGFM priority number 3	The workshop will be confirmed depending on availability of funds.
WGFM	Workshop on social and economic aspects of small-scale fisheries	February 2012	Manama, Bahrain	3–4	10 000	Approved. WGFM priority number 4	Workshop took place from 22 to 24 April 2012 in Manama, Bahrain. It was attended by delegates from four RECOFI Member. A task group was formulated to carry out a regional socio-economic work plan. The report is forthcoming.
WGFM	Regional workshop on bycatch reduction and management and evaluation and promotion of options of gear types with lower ecosystem impacts	December 2012	Kuwait City, Kuwait	TBD	15 000	Approved subject to the availability of funds	Funds were made available by RNE and the workshop is scheduled from 9 to 12 December 2012 in cooperation with FIRO

APPENDIX P

Re-evaluated priority of regional projects linked to the RECOFI prioritized objectives

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT PRIORITY	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
1. To implement effective fisheries management through regional cooperation and harmonization, including shared stocks and fisheries of common interest, based on the ecosystem approach	Development and implementation of information systems to support regional fisheries management plans	Review of national fisheries monitoring programmes	40 000 (Source: TBI)	M	Enhanced national fisheries monitoring programmes to support sustainable fisheries management
		Pilot joint assessment of ecosystem impact of shrimp fisheries	30 000 (Source: TBI)	L/M	Recommendations and options for assessing ecosystem impacts of shrimp fisheries
	Implementation of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), including vessel monitoring systems	Project to implement regionally VMS: phase 1 to ascertain feasibility	30 000 (Source: TBI)	L/M	Report with recommendations and options concerning the implementation of regional VMS
		Annual regional meeting of MCS officers to exchange information of common interest and consider the possibility of promoting a harmonized MCS approach	15 000 (Source: TBI)	L	Strengthened approach to addressing regional MCS problems through enhanced cooperation and harmonization of activities
	Implementation of measures against illegal, IUU fishing including port States measures and flag State performance criteria	Feasibility study to review development of regional databases of violations, establish a list of vessels authorized to fish by Members and the establishment of an MCS information exchange scheme (refer to FAO/ INFOSAMAK priorities)	30 000 (Source: TBI)	L	Options and recommendations to address IUU fishing in a more comprehensive and effective manner

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT PRIORITY	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
	Promotion of bycatch reduction in support of improved utilization	A study to evaluate and promote options to improve utilization of bycatch	15 000 (Source: TBI)	M/H	Reduced bycatch in fisheries
2. To facilitate human resource development and institutional strengthening to ensure the capacity to implement sustainable fisheries	Workshops, country attachments and other training opportunities to enhance human resource development	Applied training programme for fish data collectors for the identification of priority species	25 000 (Source: TBI)	M/H	Fish data collectors capable of identifying priority species
3. To promote legal discussion and review and revise fisheries legislation for harmonizing fisheries management, reflecting international instruments	Promotion of the acceptance and implementation of international instruments and harmonization of fisheries laws among Members	Comparative analysis of certain legal issues to promote further harmonization of legislation, building on initial work undertaken by RECOFI and taking into consideration other relevant work	20 000 (Source: TBI)	L	Enhanced understanding of requirements to promote greater harmonization of legislation to support regional approaches to fisheries management
4. To reflect social values and economic consideration in small-scale fisheries					

PRIORITIZED OBJECTIVES	PRIORITIZED REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	REGIONAL PROJECTS	INDICATIVE COST AND FUNDING SOURCE (USD)	PROJECT PRIORITY	MAJOR PROJECT OUTPUTS
5. To coordinate and promote information exchange and fish trade in the RECOFI Area	Promote better cooperation in regional fish trade including consideration of regional standards for fish exports and imports	Evaluation of certification and related schemes to be investigated together with the relationship between IUU fishing and trade and the estimated value of IUU fishing in the region	20 000 (Source: TBI)	L	Enhanced understanding of impacts of certification and related schemes Assessment of the effects of IUU fishing on trade Estimation of the value of IUU fishing in the region
		Workshop to consider regional standards for fish exports and imports as a means of promoting better cooperation and trade	15 000 (Source: TBI)	L	More rigorous standards for fish exports and imports

APPENDIX Q

Review of the outcomes of the tripartite initiative on fisheries management cooperation in the Northern area of RECOFI and progress

INTRODUCTION

1. At the fourth RECOFI Session, the Commission expressed the hope that Iraq will resume its role by participating in future RECOFI sessions and stressed that it would welcome further information from Iraq on priority requirements for rebuilding and rehabilitating its fisheries institutions. At the fifth Session of RECOFI (12-14 May 2009, Dubai, UAE) the delegate from Iraq, with the support of the delegates from Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Kuwait, requested that the FAO Secretariat facilitate sub-regional cooperation among the three countries on fisheries issues of common concern, including IUU fishing. The Commission agreed that the Secretariat should support this sub-regional initiative including an *ad hoc* meeting among the three Members, with the view of promoting enhanced cooperation.

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

2. The RECOFI Secretariat convened the preliminary meeting on the *Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of the RECOFI* in occasion of the FAO/RECOFI Regional Workshop on "Stock Indicators and Stock Status Reporting" that was held in Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) from 26 to 29 July 2009. The meeting was attended by participants from Iran, Iraq and Kuwait. At the meeting it was explained and agreed upon that current and future discussions should pertain exclusively to fisheries issues appropriate and coherent with the RECOFI and FAO mandate, with no reference to legal status of territories and boundaries. The participants agreed to name the current undertaking as the FAO/RECOFI "Initiative to Promote Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of the RECOFI" (henceforth "the Initiative"). The discussion focused on the identification of the priority topics, as listed below, to be included in the agenda of this initiative aimed at fostering sub-regional cooperation to support sustainable fisheries:

- fisheries management in the northern area of RECOFI including the review of effectiveness of current conservation and management measures to preserve the resources and aquaculture;
- sub-regional trade (dynamics, constraints, opportunities);
- promotion of sustainable inland, brackish and marine waters aquaculture, including stock enhancement;
- establishment of scientific cooperation and implementation of joint activities.

3. With reference to topic three above, it should be noted that the mandate of RECOFI does not include inland waters. In the sub-region concerned, however, inland waters are an essential component of the northern RECOFI's ecosystem much affecting marine fisheries production. The meeting participants concurred on the need to pursue an integrated and holistic approach in

accordance with the FAO mandate concerning freshwater fisheries and aquaculture. Moreover, it was deemed necessary to substantiate the selected topics with quantitative information to be collected through a survey questionnaire. This would create a solid base for discussion and analysis.

4. The technical meeting on Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of the RECOFI was held in Kuwait City on 1 and 2 November 2010. Based on data gathered through a questionnaire prior to the meeting as well as on discussions at the meeting, it was agreed in the meeting that the following issues were priorities for the sub-region:

- the improvement and development of institutional and technical capacities;
- the establishment of cooperative appraisal of shared stocks including biological research on life history of priority species supporting fisheries of common interest;
- a concerted formulation and implementation of measures to prevention IUU fishing including illegal transboundary landing of catch;
- the effective enforcement of fishery regulations;
- the identification of priority species essential habitats such as spawning and nursery grounds in the area concerned, including the identification of breeding and spawning seasons for the joint adoption of appropriate conservation measures;
- the creation of a cooperative research programme to assess and monitor the environmental pollution and its impact on marine biodiversity in general and on the shared fish stocks in particular in the Northern Gulf sub-region; and
- the elaboration of a joint management plan under the guidance of FAO/RECOFI for the management and conservation of the shared stocks including the prevention of fishing activities during spawning and breeding seasons.

5. There was agreement that the work plan to support fisheries management cooperation in the northern area of RECOFI should be structured around three main components encompassing the activities identified as priority and of common interest to the countries. These components were:

- capacity development in fisheries and aquaculture research and management;
- joint appraisal of shared stocks and fisheries of common interest including standard data collection and compilation; and
- improvement of sub-regional fisheries management including combating IUU fishing.

6. The Thirtieth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (Khartoum, 4-8 December 2010) unanimously agreed and requested FAO to: *Continue providing technical support to enhance cooperation among Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Kuwait related to the FAO/RECOFI initiative for sustainable fisheries management by applying the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries.*

7. A coordination meeting on the Tripartite Initiative was held on 11 October 2011 in Tehran in occasion of the 5th Meeting of the FAO/RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management. Representatives from Iraq, Iran and Kuwait concurred on a work plan that would include the participatory formulation through FAO assistance of a field programme to implement

the initiative and foster sub-regional technical cooperation and dialogue through the assistance of FAO. They also agreed to coordinate the countries request to relevant regional donors to fund the implementation of such a programme.

8. In December 2011 a project formulation mission was fielded in the region. In April 2012 the project proposal "Initiative on Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of RECOFI" has been sent to the countries concerned for review and comments.

THE WAY FORWARD: COOPERATIVE WORK PLAN

9. The Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Iraq, and the State of Kuwait share the marine waters of the northern area of RECOFI and enjoy its rich fishery and potential for marine and brackish water aquaculture. These countries have recently recorded declining catches from the marine waters and a realisation that improved management is essential to protect the stocks from over-exploitation. There have also been problems in marine finfish aquaculture in Kuwait and brackish water shrimp aquaculture in Iran. There is the potential to increase production from aquaculture, but this requires greater knowledge and technological developments.

10. Iran, Iraq and Kuwait have worked together during tripartite meetings held in 2009–2011 to prepare the groundwork for a cooperative project known as the "*Initiative on Fisheries Management Cooperation in the Northern Area of RECOFI*" or the "*Initiative*" in short. This project will jointly assess marine fisheries and marine and brackish water aquaculture in the sub-region by cooperatively exchanging information and data. This will allow the three countries to focus on various common issues and, through the RECOFI or by bi-lateral and/or multi-lateral agreements, to harmonise measures throughout the sub-region that will be consistent with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its associated Technical Guidelines and Plans of Action.

11. The Initiative project was further developed during a field visit to Iran, Iraq (at the FAO Iraq Office in Jordan) and Kuwait in December 2011 and is based as far as possible on the original concepts developed by the three countries during their tripartite meetings. The project will be implemented by FAO over a two-year period and contains elements that can be completed during that time span and elements that require further planning and support. The purpose of the project is to stimulate cooperation and it is agreed that this is best achieved by addressing real and significant issues that are presently facing fisheries and aquaculture in the sub-region.

12. The project will work with three fisheries departments to coordinate work on the shared stocks of silver pomfret *Pampus argenteus*, hilsa shad *Tenualosa ilisha*, and penaeid shrimps, following the minimum data reporting requirements adopted by RECOFI in 2011. This will be supported by research projects on hilsa shad and shrimp bycatch so that management measures are underpinned by a strong science base. The cooperative work will lead to an improved understanding of stock status and to better and harmonised management measures that can be proposed to RECOFI.

13. The project will also work with Iran, Iraq and Kuwait on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing issues and on the supporting use of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and port State control procedures, to ensure that management measures are respected. The international nature of the shared fishery will again mean that the support of RECOFI is fundamental to reduce or eliminate IUU fishing in the sub-region.

14. An additional project component is in the harmonisation and simplification of trade and market regulations that are not overly restrictive and encourage the positive benefits associated with trade. The project components require that the fisheries departments, as part of their regular program, prepare documentation and collect appropriate high quality data that can be shared and analysed at project workshops. Some of the work components will be undertaken in participatory meetings with boat owners, vessel masters or buyers, to ensure measures are consistent with the needs of all the stakeholders.

15. Lastly, it is also appreciated that the fisheries infrastructure in Iraq has suffered over the past 25 years. The Government fisheries sector is in need of rehabilitation and the marine branch in Basra in particular. The project will work with the Government fisheries department to develop a support package for the rehabilitation of its marine capacity. This will proceed along with the work on the fisheries and aquaculture development in the northern area of RECOFI.

This document contains the report of the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM), which was held in Doha, the State of Qatar from 5 to 8 November 2012. The WGFM addressed and made decisions on matters concerning relevant follow-up to fifth meeting of the RECOFI WGFM and to the Sixth Session of RECOFI that was held in Rome, Italy during the period from 10 to 12 May 2011. The status of the implementation of the fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting in recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1 that entered into force on 1 January 2012 was discussed. The report on the RECOFI Workshop on Social and Economic Aspects of Fisheries in the RECOFI Region as well as the progress on the work of the Task Group for this activity was presented and discussed. The development of regional fisheries management plans with agreed operational objectives for fisheries management was outlined. The main outcomes of the Near East and North Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and its relevance to RECOFI were presented. RECOFI participation in the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting and national inventories of fisheries in RECOFI Members were considered. The status of RECOFI's financial situation and its implications for implementing the approved Working Group on Fisheries Management workplan was discussed, as well as the priorities, and further to this, an update of the programme of work and budget for the biennium 2013–2014 was agreed. Finally, an update on the outcomes of the tripartite initiative on fisheries management cooperation in the northern area of RECOFI was presented. The next meeting of the WGFM will possibly be held in Kuwait in 2013.

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