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para la
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y la
Alimentación

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Twenty-sixth Session

Rome, Italy, 7 – 11 March 2005

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND ITS FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

This document contains an overview of the topics discussed at the Second Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and makes reference to its main recommendations. The full report is available as document COFI/2005/Inf.14. The document also provides information on the progress of the follow-up activities conducted by FAO and its partners.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Trondheim, Norway, from 7 to 11 August 2003 at the kind invitation of the Government of Norway. The full report is provided as document COFI/2005/Inf.14.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION

1. The Sub-Committee drew attention to the issue of the funds available for the Department's activities in the sub-sector and again unanimously called for increased Regular Programme budget funding support to aquaculture activities (para 11).
2. The Sub-Committee welcomed the establishment of a trust fund and appreciated the contribution of US\$ 500 000 by the Government of Japan to be used for aquaculture related activities (para 13).

Recent efforts by FAO regional fishery bodies in responsible aquaculture and culture-based fisheries

3. The Sub-Committee underscored the critical importance of regional bodies and emphasized the necessity for continued support. It also recognized the importance of the APEC initiative to establish a NACA-type organization in the Americas and that this could provide a model for increased uptake and cooperation in other regions (para 18).
 - *FAO has initiated a consultative review process to evaluate the feasibility and interest of establishing NACA-type organizations in Africa and Latin America. FAO is in communication with APEC Fisheries Working Group on its complementary activities and their progress.*

Progress in implementing the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) relevant to aquaculture and culture-based fisheries

4. The Sub-Committee recommended FAO to develop a web-based reference of aquaculture codes of practice and legislation as a means to facilitate information exchange (para 25).
 - *With the assistance from the Japanese Trust Fund Project, an activity to develop of a global overview, including comparison and synthesis, of existing procedures and methodologies of environmental impact assessment and monitoring in aquaculture, has been initiated with the view to facilitate and enable policy makers and other beneficiaries to develop and implement improved environmental assessment and management plans in aquaculture.*
 - *A web-based reference of aquaculture legislation is being developed in collaboration with the Legal Department.*
5. The Sub-Committee suggested that FAO Regional Bodies establish a database on the ecological background of main species so as to help members conduct science-based risk analyses on these species (para 29).
 - *An activity to develop “species fact sheets” covering important aquaculture species, has been initiated.*
6. Sub-Committee suggested the following inter-sessional activities be considered within budget limitations:
 - assistance with environmental risk assessments;
 - assistance with integrated planning aquaculture development in coastal areas and watersheds;
 - development of sustainability issues in aquaculture feed and best-management feed strategies (para 29).

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- *With the help of the Japanese Trust Fund, an activity has been initiated to examine the status and trends of the use of fish and/or other aquatic species as feeds for aquaculture. This study will help develop policy guidelines and recommendations for the sustainable use of fish and/or other aquatic organisms to feed cultured fish with special reference to food security and poverty alleviation.*

Improving the status and trends reporting on aquaculture

7. The Sub-Committee recognized FAO as the appropriate organization to compile global aquaculture data and information (para 32) and endorsed the development by FAO of a comprehensive, internationally agreed-upon glossary (para 33).
 - *Aquaculture content of the FAO Fisheries Glossary is being revised and updated and the first phase is expected to complete by early 2005.*
8. The Sub-Committee endorsed the upcoming Expert Consultation on Improving Global Status and Trends Reporting on Aquaculture, as well as the subsequent working group of national experts seeking to improve the FAO aquaculture questionnaires (para 37).
 - *In January of 2004, the FAO Fisheries Department convened two meetings; the Expert Consultation on Improving Information on Status and Trends of Aquaculture, and the Working Group of Experts on the FAO Aquaculture Questionnaire “FISHSTAT AQ”. The outcome was a Draft Strategy for Improving Status and Trends Reporting on Aquaculture, which will be presented to the next Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.*

Strategies to improve safety and quality of aquaculture products

9. The Sub-Committee urged FAO to assist in the harmonization of standards for health and safety of aquaculture products through the Codex Alimentarius Commission process, as well as to promote equivalence among systems (para 47).
 - *In response to the needs indicated by the member countries and also as part of FI’s assistance towards improving food safety and quality standards, assistance to national and regional capacity building is continuing, under the Regular Programme activities.*
 - *In response to a request made by the Thai Department of Fisheries, and also as a follow-up activity for implementing the recommendations of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with FAO Fisheries Department, ASEAN Secretariat and Thai Department of Fisheries organized the “FAO-ASEAN Strategic Planning Workshop on Harmonization of Standards for Shrimp Export-Import” held in Bangkok, Thailand in early November, 2003.*

- *Within the Japanese Trust Fund Project, a component has been identified to prepare technical guidelines for the operative and practical implementation of a Code of Practice for Fish and Fish Products, to support HACCP and GHP in aquaculture production, and to organize pilot workshops to demonstrate the application of these technical guidelines at the fish farm level.*

Towards responsible practices in culture-based fisheries

10. The Sub-Committee considered a range of aspects of culture-based fisheries, in relation to stocking measures and practices. (para 51). While emphasizing the importance of various aspects of culture-based fisheries (para 52), the Sub-Committee suggested that the following inter-sessional activities should be undertaken:

- formulation of technical guidelines and best practices for responsible stocking programmes;
 - feasibility assessment of shrimp ranching;
 - specific risk evaluations of transfers of selected species;
 - support to regional cooperation on and coordination of stocking programmes covering and potentially affecting trans-boundary water;
 - compilation of case studies illustrating successful stocking practices in the marine, coastal and inland environments (para 56).
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- *To address the specific risk evaluations of transfers of selected species, a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed between the four riparian countries on the responsible use and control of alien species in fisheries within the Lake Tanganyika Basin. Further, with the support from the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme, a one-day seminar on addressing alien species in Africa was also held during the 13th CIFA session.*
 - *To formulate technical guidelines and best practices for responsible stocking programmes, a visiting scientist has been contracted through the Partnership Programme to develop Technical Guidelines for Responsible Stocking Programmes.*
 - *To support regional cooperation on and coordination of stocking programmes covering and potentially affecting trans-boundary waters, a workshop on stocking and genetic resource management is being organized with the collaboration of Iran and NACA.*
 - *To compile case studies illustrating successful stocking practices in the marine, coastal and inland environments, a series of case studies on Marine Ranching is being produced.*
 - *A study has been initiated with the assistance from the Japanese Trust Fund Project; (a) to facilitate the development of improved aquaculture systems using wild-caught aquatic resources with optimized social and economic benefits; (b) to develop protocols and guidelines*

for harvesting of fishery resources from nature for aquaculture; (c) to raise awareness of the potential benefits and risks in such harvest; and (d) to determine when such harvest should be pursued as an aquaculture development strategy.

Other matters, emerging issues and related areas of work

11. Under “Other matters”, the Sub-Committee supported the holding of inter-sessional technical activities, possibly through the formation of inter-sessional technical working groups in conformity with FAO Basic Texts, to address the following issues:
 - Risk assessment and management associated with the movement and transfer of live aquatic animals;
 - Introduction of exotic species, including ornamentals;
 - Accidental introduction through ballast waters (para 63).
 - *FAO collaborated with the Department of Fisheries of the Government of Malaysia, the Network of Aquaculture Centres of Asia-Pacific (NACA), ASEAN, the WorldFish Center and the United States Department of State in organizing and conducting a workshop on “Building capacity to combat impacts of aquatic invasive alien species and associated trans-boundary pathogens in ASEAN countries”, which was held in Penang, Malaysia, in July 2004. The meeting was convened specifically to better understand the relationship of aquatic IAS and pathogens and their impacts (both positive and negative), and to identify management and capacity building needs to reduce risks.*
 - *An activity towards developing CCRF Technical Guidelines on Health management in Safe Trans-boundary Movement of Live Aquatic Animals has been initiated. It is envisaged that these Guidelines will be available by mid 2006. Additional financial support has been provided by the Government of Norway and the FAO FishCode Partnership.*
12. The Sub-Committee also noted the outcomes of the Expert Consultation on Good Management Practices and Good Legal and Institutional Arrangements for Sustainable Shrimp Culture that was held in Brisbane, Australia, in December 2000 and requested that FAO facilitates and develops follow-up activities recommended at the Consultation (para 67).
 - *An activity has been initiated to take the Brisbane Consultation process further, and to take the full benefit of the work done by the Shrimp Farming and the Environment Consortium (FAO, NACA, WWF, and WB) in drafting better management principles for shrimp culture. These principles will be further developed during 2004 and 2005, through a comprehensive consultative process and will be presented to the next session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture in 2006.*
13. The Sub-Committee requested that FAO should work to review and analyse the various certification systems in place with a view to ensure harmonized approaches and

procedures for the development and implementation of shrimp aquaculture product certification systems (para 69).

- *Action has been taken to provide information on all aspects of certification of shrimp aquaculture products, and related issues concerning their implementation, through the development of a website under the Shrimp Farming and the Environment programme. This is an initial attempt to provide information to those interested in certification, and engage stakeholder opinion on various aspects of shrimp aquaculture certification.*

14. The Sub-Committee agreed that the Secretariat should provide a prospective analysis of future challenges in global aquaculture as a basis for a discussion of the longer term direction of the Sub-Committee's work (para 73).

- *A Regular Programme activity has been created and work is underway to facilitate this analysis and review with the view to report to the next session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture in 2006.*

15. The Sub -Committee noted that the United States of America and the European Community offered to jointly lead, in collaboration with FAO, the inter-sessional work on environmental risk assessment, including species introductions and undertaking a thematic evaluation of social and economic impact of aquaculture (para 74).

- *The Secretariat of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture is currently in contact and discussion with the United States and the European Union to initiate this work.*

Date and place of the third session

16. The Sub-Committee agreed that its Third Session should be held in 2006. It welcomed the offer by India to host the session and noted the confirmation by the United States of America to host a session of the Sub-Committee (para 78).

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE

17. The Committee is invited to endorse the report of its Sub-Committee (COFI/2005/Inf.14), to comment on the follow-up activities so far accomplished and to provide guidance for future work.