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COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ON HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN FISHERIES

SUMMARY

This document presents the Strategic Framework on human capacity development for the sustainable development of fisheries as recommended by the FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research at its fifth session in October 2004. It outlines the overall goal, related objectives and certain guiding principles of the Framework. Key strategies and related actions are specified, calling on States, international and bilateral agencies, regional fishery bodies, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and fishers themselves, all to take on certain commitments in order to ensure that improved human capacity development in fisheries is achieved.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Human capacity development has been defined as *“the process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and societies develop their abilities – both individually and collectively – to set and achieve objectives, perform functions, solve problems and to develop the means and conditions required to enable this process”*.
2. The ability of the world’s fisheries resources to generate nutritional, social and economic benefits is firmly rooted in our collective “capacity” to manage and regulate their use. This capacity was traditionally based upon the intergenerational knowledge of fishers and their forbearers, but with rapidly increasing populations and the rising efficiency of fishing methods, many fisheries have become increasingly dependent upon the ability of the research community, resource managers and policy-makers to make decisions on their behalf. It is here, therefore, where much of the effort in capacity development for resource management was directed in recent times.
3. While some progress has been made, there is increasing recognition that a) greater human capacity improvements are necessary, and b) the centralized and top-down approach has ignored – or at least underestimated – the importance of local knowledge, institutions and social capital in the process of economic and social development. As a result, there is a more recent trend towards merging the top-down and bottom-up approaches through co-management and other initiatives. Such developments over the past twenty years have led FAO, and others, to advocate a number of profound changes in the way we undertake fisheries resource management. Instruments promoting these changes include:

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- the Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 (1992), as adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) – which focuses on sustainable development and poverty alleviation, particularly through community-based approaches;
 - the *FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* (1995), hereafter referred as the Code of Conduct, where Article 5 urges that the particular requirements of developing countries are recognized in implementing its provisions. It requests that FAO elaborate an interregional assistance programme so that developing countries are better placed to meet their obligations under the Code of Conduct;
 - *FAO International Plans of Action (IPOAs)* for implementing various aspects of the Code of Conduct, including national plans (i) for the management of fishing capacity (1999), (ii) for reducing incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries (1999), (iii) for the conservation and management of sharks (1999); and (iv) to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (2001);
 - the *Reykjavik Declaration on Responsible Fisheries in Marine Ecosystems* (2001), which calls for greater consideration of ecosystems in setting fisheries management objectives (the so-called ecosystem-based fisheries management approach);
 - the *Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries* (2003), which emphasizes the need for capacity building in developing countries.

4. There has also been a significant shift in global thinking that influences the ways in which fisheries and their underlying ecosystems are utilized and managed, and the role in which development partners such as FAO interact in this process, including:

- a greater emphasis on sustainability and the environment, as reflected in the targets set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, 2002);
- a move in public management towards decentralization, strengthening relationships between government and civil society, privatization and deregulation;
- an increasing emphasis on good governance, e.g. participation, accountability, transparency;
- a wider recognition of the need for donor initiatives to be both cost-effective and demand-driven, with more emphasis on partnership;
- a transformation in the way people and organizations can communicate and learn as a result of the Internet-based information and communications revolution;
- an increase in creativity and innovation from developing countries; and
- a greater awareness of the need for a more integrated, holistic approach to development, rather than the historical emphasis on sectoral approaches.

5. This recent period of rapid change implies the need to review past successes and failures of human capacity development in fisheries in order to identify the emerging needs and opportunities for improving our stewardship of the world's fisheries resources. The Working Party of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) recognized that past approaches to capacity development (both in fisheries and other sectors) have tended to focus primarily on technical support through skill-based training to individuals and through institutional strengthening. Less attention had been paid to non-sector specific knowledge and skills such as business management, socio-economics and good governance. A number of key lessons are drawn from previous activities, the most important being that:

- Capacity development initiatives must be participatory in design, implementation and monitoring. Initiatives must build on core capacities and be a two-way process of knowledge transfer.
- Initiatives must provide for flexible and suitable learning pathways.
- Approaches must take greater cognizance of the overall societal/political context in which initiatives operate.
- There is a need for much better integration of initiatives based on regional/geographical, intra-sectoral, inter-sectoral and vertical linkages.

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- Appropriate incentives must be built into capacity development initiatives.
 - Those delivering capacity development may themselves require capacity development for effective delivery.

6. An overarching lesson learned was that capacity needs to be consolidated and strengthened at four levels: in *individuals*, in *organizations/institutions*, in *sectors and networks*, and in the overall *enabling environment* in which the first three functions (see Appendix A). Initiatives must therefore take a holistic view of the context in which individuals operate. Capacity development is also a process whereby individual development becomes embedded in a sustainable shift in performance contributing to collective behaviour.

PART 2: NATURE AND SCOPE

Nature of the Strategic Framework

7. This Strategic Framework has been elaborated within the framework of the Code of Conduct, as envisaged by Article 2 (e). All concerned Members and non-members of FAO and fishing entities are encouraged to support its implementation.

8. Article 5 of the Code of Conduct specifically identifies the need to recognize and understand the particular challenges faced by developing countries in supporting its implementation and urges States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions to work for the adoption of measures to address the needs of developing countries, especially in the areas of financial and technical assistance, technology transfer, training and scientific cooperation and in enhancing their ability to develop their own fisheries as well as to participate in high seas fisheries, including access to such fisheries. The Strategic Framework also recognizes that, while capacity issues may be greater in magnitude in developing countries, they also affect developed countries, especially where there is a high level of skill migration or where efforts are made to tackle novel emerging concepts such as the ecosystem-based fisheries management approach.

9. Article 6.16 of the Code of Conduct refers to promote the awareness of responsible fishing through education and training. Article 8.1.7 suggests that States should enhance, through education and training programmes the education and skills of fishers and, where appropriate, their professional qualifications, taking into account agreed international standards and guidelines. Article 12.1 also suggests that States should ensure appropriate training, staffing and institution building to conduct research, again taking into account the special needs of developing countries.

10. In this Strategic Framework, the reference to States includes the European Community in matters within its competence.

Scope of the Strategic Framework

11. The Strategic Framework is global in scope and designed to cover all capture fisheries and aquaculture in inland and marine waters, including all industrial, artisanal, subsistence and recreational fisheries.

12. Capacity initiatives should take a holistic view of the overall context in which individuals operate, in order to enable individuals or institutions to implement and utilize newly-acquired capacity. The Strategic Framework is intended to be wide-ranging and can be equally applied to individuals, organizations, discrete and networked sectors, as well as the wider enabling environment that represents the societal context in which development processes take place.

13. The Strategic Framework focuses on an integrated approach based on the following three broad knowledge and skill groupings:

- Fisheries science and research – While many technical subjects are now well-established, several new areas are emerging that have a less established knowledge and skill-base, such as aquatic ecosystem management and the process by which research responds to management and policy issues.
- Fisheries sector management – In addition to the traditional areas of fisheries sector management, a number of themes have emerged in recent years, such as the management of fishing capacity and poverty alleviation. These require particular skill sets that are often novel and may need different approaches to human capacity development than usually used in fisheries.
- Societal skills and knowledge – Societal skills that focus on fisheries-specific issues, as well as wider aspects, that can contribute to an enabling environment require capacity development at the national and sector level. This would assist and facilitate good economic policies and good governance. It also recognizes that fisheries managers and other stakeholders need to possess wider management skills.

PART 3: VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Vision statement

14. “A society that has the ability, means and conditions to achieve the sustainable development of fisheries, at local to global levels, for the benefit of all and to meet the targets of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation as well as the Millennium Development Goals.”

Overall goal

15. The overall goal of this Strategic Framework is to increase the capacity of individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies to develop their abilities, individually and collectively, to ensure the sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) of the world’s fisheries, based on current and emerging trends and needs.

Objectives

16. Within this overall goal there are a number of discrete objectives. These include to:
- strengthen the ability of all nations, especially developing countries, to implement the Code of Conduct and to develop fisheries management regimes through a precautionary approach;
 - provide a framework that facilitates the prioritization and strengthening of sustainable capacity-development initiatives through regional and national strategies that address local issues;
 - broaden the scope of human capacity development initiatives to include the wider enabling environment that permits good governance, including effective participatory processes and the integration of the environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainable development;
 - develop and facilitate partnerships at a number of levels and scales, including regional partnerships that take strength from the existing regional fishery bodies and arrangements, as well as wider global coordination and cooperation between different donors and other development partners;
 - facilitate collaboration within and between States, at different political and societal levels and between (i) scientists, policy-makers, managers, communities, fishers, fish workers and other stakeholders, (ii) fisheries and other sectors, and (iii) the public and private sectors; and

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- develop a network of effective delivery mechanisms for capacity development through appropriate partnerships including acknowledged centres of excellence.

PART 4: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

17. The arrangements for implementation of this Strategic Framework should be based upon the guiding principles highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Prioritization

18. Human capacity development should be geared towards addressing the global priorities for sustainable development of fisheries, namely continued and greater implementation of the Code of Conduct, combating of illegal unreported and unregulated fishing and reducing fishing capacity, applying the ecosystem approach and maintaining or restoring fish stocks.

Equity

19. The current regional imbalance in standards of human capacity should be reduced through focused capacity-development initiatives.

Sustainability of capacity development

20. Developmental assistance should help build robust, sustainable capacities and capabilities.

21. Human capacity development should be considered a long-term process that requires careful planning, investment and effective implementation.

Participation and cooperation

22. Partnerships are essential to capitalize on acknowledged centres of excellence. These partnerships should cover the wide array of specializations essential for holistic management, enhancing knowledge and capturing experience.

Regional self-development

23. It is primarily the responsibility of the nations to ensure their own capacity development.

24. Capacity development should build upon existing local knowledge and skills.

25. Regional fishery bodies and arrangements, where appropriate, should provide a proactive role in defining regional capacity-development needs and facilitating a cooperative response.

Information and communication technology

26. An effective response should be developed to bridge the “digital divide” by taking advantage of the information and communications technologies for e-learning, information access and networking.

Results-based monitoring and evaluation

27. Monitoring and evaluation of capacity development should be based on fisheries management indicators in addition to human capacity improvement indicators, both over the short- and long-term.

PART 5: KEY STRATEGIES AND REQUIRED ACTIONS

28. The Strategic Framework contains eight key strategies to achieve the vision, overall goal and objectives. These strategies, together with the related actions, are set out below.

Strategy 1: Capacity development focused at the appropriate level

29. Capacity development needs to be focused at four levels: (i) individuals, (ii) institutions and organizations, (iii) sector-wide and (iv) the enabling environment.

Required actions:

30. States, relevant intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions should, at the stage of identifying fisheries development/management initiatives, assess the relative capacity-development needs of recipients at all four levels and ensure they are appropriately addressed.

31. States, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions should ensure that the identification, implementation and monitoring of capacity-development initiatives are strongly participatory, with continued interaction among the (i) development partners, (ii) funding agencies, (iii) recipients (both at individual and institutional levels) and (iv) the capacity-development providers.

Strategy 2: Building upon existing capacity development and broadening the knowledge and skills of all stakeholders

32. Capacity development needs to be focused at three groups of fisheries-related capacity needs: (i) *fisheries science and research*, (ii) *fisheries sector management* and (iii) *societal skills*. The enabling environment functions of the third group need particular attention. A coherent approach to address and integrate all three and not necessarily through one single initiative, is necessary.

Required actions:

33. States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions need to ensure adequate effort, during both programme and project design and recurrent sectoral policy reviews, on the relative needs of, and responses to, all three knowledge and skill areas;

34. States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions should ensure that the identification, implementation and monitoring of capacity needs for development are strongly participatory, with a clearly identified two-way process;

35. Regional fishery bodies and arrangements should, where appropriate, establish a regional knowledge and skills needs analysis around the three main groups, stratified at the appropriate levels, in preparation for development of regional networks, centres of excellence and partnerships.

36. FAO, academic institutions and other relevant organizations should continue to lead and develop normative work on human capacity development in fisheries.

Strategy 3: Development of regional capacity-development networks

37. Develop regional networks to address common issues and promote self-reliance through regional capacity development.

Required actions:

38. States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions should establish regional fora (within and among themselves) to identify common needs, optimize in joint delivery of programmes and share information.

39. FAO and other relevant organizations should initiate a regionally-based assessment of existing institutions and organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) and their capability to provide capacity-development services across the capacity-development levels and knowledge and skill areas.

Strategy 4: Identification and recognition of regional centres of excellence

40. Identify and recognize centres of excellence linked to regional networks for specific scientific and managerial skills and knowledge which could act as potential service providers. These centres of excellence might be research facilities, academic institutions, private sector businesses or state sector management institutions.

Required actions:

41. FAO, through the coordination of regional fishery bodies and arrangements, should identify one or more key national institutions that are, or have the potential for becoming, regional “centres of excellence” for developing knowledge and skill areas relevant to the technical and non-technical expertise required by fishers, fish workers and managers.

42. Regional fishery bodies and arrangements should establish and formalize a human capacity-development network consisting of one or more regional centres of excellence for each skill area identified as both relevant to the region and responding to the societal levels of the potential recipients. Where possible, these centres of excellence will be geographically dispersed among regional states.

43. States, through the coordination and assistance of regional fishery bodies and arrangements, should develop linkages with these centres of excellence in order to establish opportunities for skills and knowledge transfer, exchange of experience and partnership development.

Strategy 5: Establishment of improved cross-sectoral linkages and cooperation

44. Establish better cross-sectoral linkages, including horizontal links within the fisheries sector, for example between researchers and policy-makers or between fisher organizations, fishers and researchers, but also better linkages between sectors to understand and manage the impacts of other sectors on fisheries.

Required actions:

45. States should establish better linkages and fora between stakeholders within fisheries, for example to allow research institutions and stakeholders to make meaningful inputs into policy. Capacity-development support should be provided to technical staff and other stakeholders, for example in sustainable livelihood analysis, integrated coastal area management and other socio-economic skills. Fisher organizations, fishers and fish workers may require assistance in mobilizing representation, consensus building and resource co-management.

46. States, with the assistance of regional fishery bodies and arrangements, should improve linkages between scientists, data providers and sectoral decision-makers to reduce capacity limitations in applied research and monitoring. Capacity-development support will be required in

setting realistic and practical management objectives and monitoring targets, especially in pursuing the ecosystem-based fisheries approach.

47. States, in collaboration with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, should establish fora for improved management and understanding of inter-sectoral impacts. Capacity-development support will be required in facilitating dialogue at policy (e.g. interministerial) and operational (e.g. watershed or coastal management) levels through improved sector planning, communication and coordination skills.

Strategy 6: *Appropriate delivery mechanisms to suit local circumstances*

48. Tailor delivery mechanisms through a participatory process to ensure they meet the particular needs, capabilities and funding of the recipients, matching appropriate service providers.

Required actions:

49. States, in collaboration with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions, should assess the need for mixed capacity-development delivery mechanisms that allow for the practical requirements and flexibility needed by beneficiaries.

50. States, in collaboration with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions, should utilize formal processes to match delivery mechanism options to the level, aspects and area of capacity being targeted.

51. States, in collaboration with relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and financial institutions, should ensure the capacity of providers to undertake their roles effectively, and selection of providers should be based on categorization and the establishment/recognition of centres of excellence for specific skills and knowledge.

52. Organizations and institutions should promote opportunities for the use of mentors and “on-the-job” training, as these are seen as particularly cost-effective.

53. States should embrace new information and communication technologies that increase accessibility to knowledge and promote cooperation.

Strategy 7: *Sustainability of capacity-development initiatives*

54. Establish long-term capacity-development initiatives where (i) individuals are encouraged, and able, to reinvest their new knowledge and skills in the fisheries sector and (ii) the capacity of institutions is strengthened to adapt to change.

Required actions:

55. States should develop an enabling environment that allows individuals, organizations and institutions to flourish in a stable, robust and interactive society taking greater cognizance of the overall societal context and the political influence of supported institutions and sectors.

56. States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and public and private sector institutions should assist to develop human resource development plans where individuals are encouraged to pursue a clear, progressive and well-rewarded career path. This should include the use of regularly-reviewed personal development plans with associated training needs assessments and career appraisals. This process will require a better understanding of individuals work environment requirements, lifestyles and aspirations.

57. States, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and public and private sector institutions should strengthen their abilities to assess their own functional capacities and skill flows in order to monitor dynamic changes that occur over time. This will allow a dynamic approach to identifying and addressing knowledge and skill gaps, and permit the development of strategies to retain key staff for core functions.

58. FAO, other development agencies and donors should enhance their own capacities in order to respond to the changing needs of the fisheries sector. This requires a balance between field-based activities and normative work on capacity-development approaches and delivery mechanisms.

Strategy 8: Application of results-based management to capacity-development approaches

59. Improve the understanding of capacity-development “success” and its measurability, to ensure that initiatives build upon prior experience and lessons learned.

Required actions:

60. States, with the assistance of intergovernmental organizations, should conduct further investigation into both fisheries and human capacity indicators, and develop a suite of indicators relating to process, product, performance, output and sustainability.

61. FAO, other international organizations, development agencies and donors should establish common protocols on ex ante and ex post evaluation of capacity-development needs and outcomes. In particular, longer-term ex post analyses are required to assess the success and sustainability of capacity development initiatives.

PART 6: PROMOTION AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

General call for improving human capacity development in fisheries

62. States, regional fishery bodies and arrangements should develop national and regional plans for improving human capacity development at all levels in society and in a wide range of technical, managerial and enabling roles. These plans should be realized through a series of linked short-term and long-term actions that are developed through partnerships.

The role of States

63. States have a key role in the implementation of this Strategic Framework, both at the national level but also as main participants in regional activities. Of primary importance is the need to provide an enabling environment where well-functioning institutions, comprising of motivated and dedicated individuals, can flourish in a climate of good governance, a principled policy climate and the rule of law.

64. States should evaluate the actions they need to take to improve their capacity to responsibly manage their fisheries, address these requirements on a priority basis and report on the improvements they make, as part of their biennial report to FAO on the Code of Conduct.

The role of regional fishery bodies and arrangements

65. Regional fishery bodies and arrangements, within the limits defined by their conventions and to the extent mandated by their members, should participate in the implementation of this overarching Strategic Framework by providing support to their members in identifying a regional plan for human capacity development in fisheries.

66. Regional fishery bodies and arrangements should, within the limits defined by their conventions and to the extent mandated by their members, take a lead in assisting their members identifying potential partnerships and networking opportunities at both regional and interregional levels, that might serve to assist and implement the regional plan.

The role of FAO

67. FAO will, as and to the extent directed by its Conference, and as part of its Regular and Field Programme activities, support States and regional fishery bodies and arrangements in the implementation of this Strategic Framework.

68. FAO will, as and to the extent directed by its Conference, support member States implementation of this Strategic Framework, through in-country technical assistance projects using Regular Programme funds and by use of extra-budgetary funds made available to the Organization for this purpose. For better conservation and management of fishery resources, FAO should prepare a specific programme for improving the planning, implementation and monitoring of human capacity development in fisheries.

69. FAO will, through the Committee on Fisheries, report biennially on the state of progress in the implementation of this Strategic Framework.

The role of development partner agencies and non-governmental organizations

70. International and national development partner agencies and organizations should give priority to the provision of financial and technical assistance where it is most needed, in the form of targeted capacity development within this overall Strategic Framework and the development of subsequent regional plans.

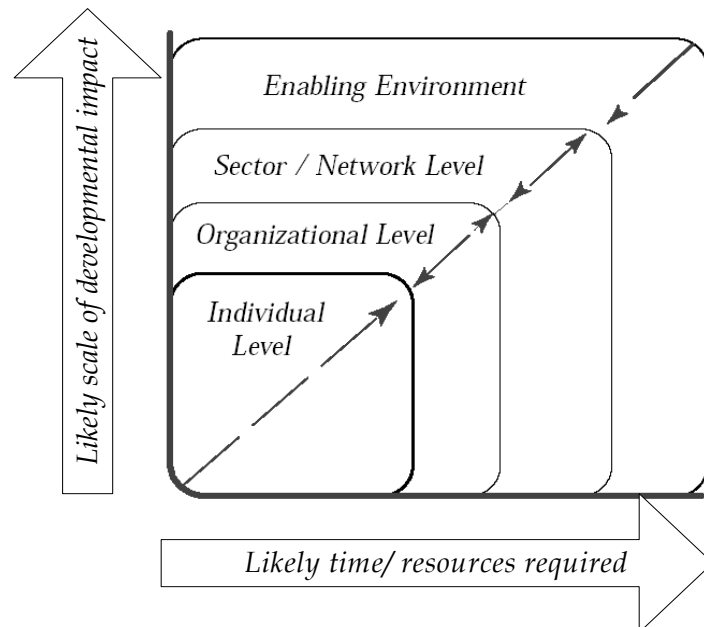
71. Non-governmental organizations (national, regional and international) concerned with fisheries, fishers and fish workers and the aquatic environment and related research, should participate in the implementation of the Strategic Framework through appropriate support, information, development of methods and capacity development.

The role of resources users

72. Fisher organizations, fishers and fish workers have an important role to play in both the development of their own capacity for resource stewardship and co-management, as well as the way they interact with scientists, resource managers and policy-makers. This process is often best developed on a collective basis and thus increased efforts to form representative stakeholder groups, with whom States, relevant government agencies, non-governmental organizations and private sector institutions can interact, is essential. These groups can participate in capacity-assessment exercises as well as training needs analyses and curriculum development initiatives.

The role of the private sector

73. In certain situations, private-public partnerships may be appropriate in providing novel capacity-development mechanisms, for example Internet-based training delivery and provision of information. Such partnerships can be an efficient way to capitalize on the unique strengths of the public and private sectors. They also offer the potential to access greater levels of funds/investment, additional expertise and enthusiasm, and to generate profits to ensure sustainability.

APPENDIX 1:**The four levels of capacity development**

Source: Adapted from Bolger, J. *Capacity Development: Why, what and how?* CIDA. Occasional Series Vol. 1 No. 1 May, 2000,

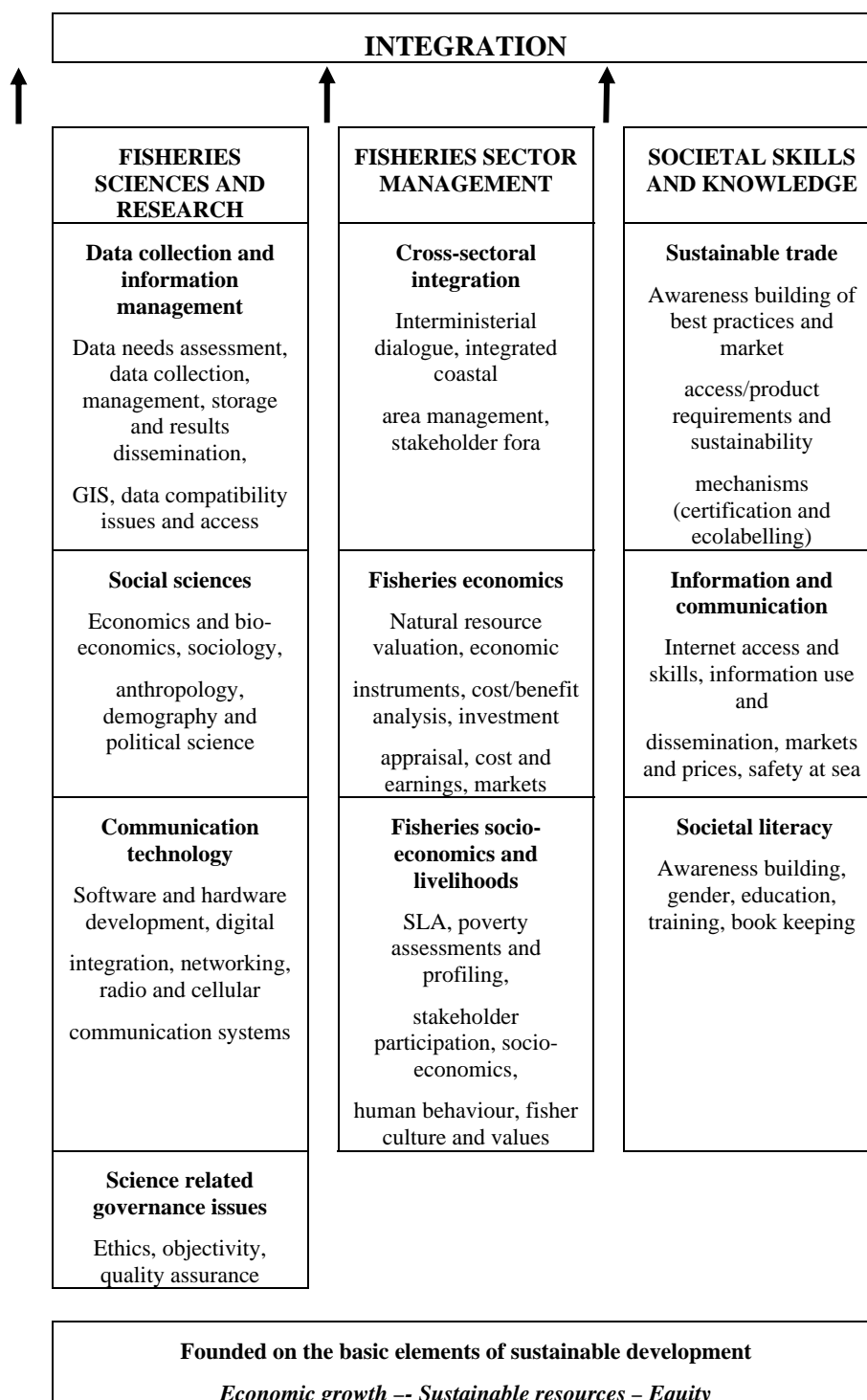
APPENDIX 2:

The key knowledge and skill groupings on capacity development for fisheries



(cont.)

APPENDIX 2 (continued)



Source: Modified by the ACFR Working Party on Human Capacity Development and the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (at its fifth session in 2004) in an original draft by Macfadyen, G. and Huntington T. 2003. Human capacity building in fisheries. Draft report to the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd, Lymington, UK.

APPENDIX 3: Lessons learned from previous capacity-development initiatives**Capacity assessment**

- Lesson 1: The process of human capacity development itself can add value to overall capability, as well as result in the improved performance of individuals, groups and organizations.
- Lesson 2: Initiatives should take account of, and be tailored to, existing levels of core capacities and involve a two-way process of knowledge transfer and acquisition.
- Lesson 3: Human capacity-development initiatives need to identify the individuals and organizations that will champion the process and can adopt and lead human capacity development.
- Lesson 4: There is a need for better integration of human capacity development initiatives with national planning processes, especially among policy, management and research.

Needs analysis

- Lesson 5: Capacity-development initiatives should establish an adequate level of participation in their needs assessment, design, implementation and monitoring.

Delivery

- Lesson 6: Initiatives should provide adaptable, flexible and suitable learning pathways, taking into account an individual's work environment, lifestyle and aspirations.
- Lesson 7: Incentives and mechanisms should be provided to support human capacity development.

Sustainability

- Lesson 8: Human capacity-development is a long-term process that requires continued support through national initiatives and partnerships.
- Lesson 9: Efforts should be made to retain capacity investment within the fisheries sector.
- Lesson 10: Those delivering human capacity development initiatives should themselves have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to provide human capacity-development.

Enabling environment

- Lesson 11: Approaches to capacity development should take greater cognizance of the overall societal context and the political influence of supported institutions and sectors.
- Lesson 12: Approaches should ensure an adequate focus on the social, economic and environmental context in which technical solutions are being implemented.
- Lesson 13: Initiatives should capture and enable attitudinal changes and skills that are likely to result in a collective sense of purpose and progress.
- Lesson 14: Initiatives should recognize the need for an enabling environment that provides the incentive to promote the use and further development of the enhanced capacity.
- Lesson 15: Planning human capacity development should take into account the realities of the overall environment under which capacity enhancement will take place.