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COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Ninth Session

Rome, 24–27 October 2017

REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ROME, ITALY, 20–22 JUNE 2016



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

**COMMISSION ON
GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE**

CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Report

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

Rome, Italy, 20 – 22 June 2016

CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/REPORT

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION

OF THE

**AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Rome, Italy, 20–22 June 2016

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Rome, 2016

The documents prepared for the First Session of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture are available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/AqGenRes2016/default.htm>

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The First Session of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Working Group) was held in Rome, Italy, from 20 to 22 June 2016. The members and alternates of the Working Group are listed in *Appendix B*. The list of delegates and observers is contained in *Appendix C*.

II. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ELECTION OF THE CHAIR, VICE-CHAIRS AND RAPPORTEUR

2. Mr Árni Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Working Group and observers. He highlighted that aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture (AqGR) are a cornerstone for the development of the fast evolving aquaculture sector and reflected in FAO's policies, programmes and activities. Referring to the preparation process for the report on *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, he noted that information provided in the country reports so far received, although preliminary, revealed that AqGR of farmed species and their wild relatives play important roles in fish production and food security. He further noted that country reports also demonstrated that more aquatic species and farmed types were being used by countries than had previously been reported to FAO. Mr Mathiesen emphasized that the report on *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* complements and adds value to the ongoing work of FAO in collecting, analysing and disseminating information on fisheries and aquaculture.

3. Ms Irene Hoffmann, Secretary, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), welcomed delegates and observers. She noted that genetic resources play an essential role in making agriculture and food systems efficient and sustainable, as stipulated by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She further noted that the work of the Commission and its Working Groups contributes to several targets of the SDGs. She also recalled the history of the establishment of the Working Group as an advisory body to the Commission, and noted the progress that had been made in the development of the draft report on *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* covering both aquatic plant and animal genetic resources. She thanked countries that had submitted country reports and invited countries which had not yet done so to submit their country reports as soon as possible to allow for a more complete revision of the draft report.

4. The Working Group elected Mr Mohd Fariddudin Othman (Malaysia) as Chair of the Working Group. Mr Belemane Semoli (South Africa), Mr Clemens Fieseler (Germany), Ms Marcela Costagliola (Argentina), Mr Ahmed Saney (Egypt) and Mr Percy Rechelluul (Palau) were elected as Vice-Chairs. Mr Clemens Fieseler (Germany) was elected *Rapporteur*.

5. The Chair informed the Working Group that, in line with Article III of the Statutes of the Working Group, Saudi Arabia (instead of Kuwait) and Senegal (instead of Cape Verde) would participate in the meeting as members.

6. The Working Group adopted the agenda, as given in *Appendix A*.

III. PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

7. The Working Group considered the documents, *Preparation of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*,¹ and *Draft State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.²

¹ CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/2 Rev.1.

² CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.2.

8. The Working Group noted that the *Draft State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (Draft Report) is a preliminary analysis based on a limited set of 47 Country Reports officially submitted before 15 April 2016. It noted that a higher number of Country Reports and additional work are needed to finalize the report on *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (Report), and recommended that the Commission invite countries that have not yet done so to nominate National Focal Points and to submit Country Reports by 31 March 2017, and encourage countries that have already submitted a Country Report to submit a revised version, as appropriate, within the same deadline.

9. The Working Group welcomed the structure of the draft report. It recommended that the Commission request FAO to continue its work towards the finalization of the Report, for consideration by the Working Group at its Second Session and by the Commission at its Seventeenth Session. It further recommended that FAO, in revising the Draft Report:

- Identify individual countries in the analysis in addition to the summaries by region or sub-region, as appropriate;
- Include specific country examples and case studies to illustrate issues, where relevant;
- Provide an analysis by developing versus developed countries, as appropriate;
- Include some examples of new species and farmed types identified from Country Reports that have not been previously been reported to FAO;
- Revise the references to all countries to ensure they accurately reflect the information provided in national reports, in particular in the last part of sub-chapter 7.2 of chapter 7;
- Revise the conclusions of sub-chapter 7.4 of chapter 7 that cannot be inferred from the information contained in the report, in particular on access and benefit sharing regimes;
- Streamline the quotation in the last paragraph of sub-chapter 6.5 of chapter 6;
- Use additional information (e.g. from the scientific literature, international, regional and national organizations and networks, and advanced scientific institutions) to complement Country Reports and contribute to a more comprehensive assessment;
- Harmonize definitions throughout the Report and provide a full glossary of key terms;
- Clearly identify all sources of information, including in tables and figures;
- Provide an in-depth analysis of findings, including inter alia on climate change, habitat change and invasive species as drivers impacting AqGR;
- Distinguish between policies and strategies and include soft law instruments, such as codes of conduct and voluntary guidelines;
- Clarify some of the concepts referred to in the chapters (e.g. *in situ* conservation and access and benefit sharing regimes);
- Acknowledge the challenges of collaboration for the management of AqGR, especially for the transboundary conservation of migratory species;
- Include some specific examples of successful AqGR *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation programmes and strategies, and stress the complementarity of the two conservation approaches;
- Acknowledge the value of aquatic protected areas in conserving AqGR and there must be a balance between conservation and development taking into consideration conditions in different areas;
- Demonstrate the close linkages between aquaculture and capture fisheries systems that depend on wild AqGR;
- Ensure that information provided complement the information contained in *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* (SOFIA);
- Include an analysis of how effective the various networks contribute to the sustainable use and conservation of AqGR and
- Highlight key findings and gaps that will require a policy response to improve the sustainable use and conservation of AqGR.

10. The Working Group recommended that the Commission invite countries to include in their Country Reports as much specific information as possible on AqGR using the standardized questionnaire and respond to an additional survey on stakeholders with interest in AqGR.
11. The Working Group noted the high level of technical capacity required to manage and conserve AqGR. It recommended that the Commission request FAO, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary funds, to continue organizing regional capacity building workshops and strengthen national institutions and human capacity in the conservation and use of AqGR.
12. The Working Group noted the difficulties encountered by National Focal Points in preparing Country Reports, especially in the need to consult and obtain information from a wide variety of stakeholders. It recommended that the Commission invite countries and other stakeholders to promote increased collaboration with advanced scientific institutions, regional networks and other countries with good capacity, and to call for increased financial resources to address these issues.
13. The Working Group noted the limited integration between research, education and policy formulation and recommended that the Commission promote stronger ties among these components relating to AqGR. The Working Group stressed the role of regional and international networks to facilitate technological and scientific exchange as well as the exchange of AqGR and recommended that the Commission invite these networks in the process of preparing the Report, including in its independent external review.
14. The Working Group recommended that the Commission request FAO to support countries, upon request from governments, in the development of awareness raising, capacity building and policy implementation activities addressing AqGR, including the strengthening and outreach for national and regional networks in particular, in developing countries.

IV. REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES ADVISORY WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGIES

15. The Working Group considered the document, *Summary of the Report of the first session of the Committee on Fisheries Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies*³. It took also note of the full meeting report.⁴
16. The Working Group took note of the tentative work plan of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies (COFI Advisory Working Group). It recommended that the Commission reiterate its invitation to the COFI Advisory Working Group to contribute to the preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, including by providing comments on the draft report. It recommended that the COFI Advisory Working Group be informed of the outcome of this session of the Working Group.

V. ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING FOR AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES

17. The Working Group considered the document *Elaboration of subsector-specific elements for access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture*⁵. The Working Group commended the *Elements to Facilitate Domestic Implementation of Access and Benefit-Sharing for Different Subsectors of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, as welcomed by the Commission and the FAO Conference.
18. The Working Group recommended that the Team of Technical and Legal Experts on Access and Benefit-Sharing consider existing use and exchange practices typical of the AqGR sector under existing frameworks. It further recommended that the Commission collect, for consideration by the Working Group at its next session, country experiences with existing access and benefit-sharing

³ CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/3.

⁴ CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.3. Full report available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5553e.pdf>

⁵ CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/4.

frameworks providing special provisions for AqGR, including those held by indigenous peoples and local communities, and traditional knowledge associated with AqGR.

19. The Working Group recommended that the Secretary of the Commission continue strengthening information exchange and collaboration with other relevant bodies and instruments, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

VI. REVIEW OF THE COMMISSION'S MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK

20. The Working Group considered the document *Review of implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work and Draft Strategic Plan for the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (2018-2027)*.⁶

21. The Working Group noted the progress made by the Commission over the last decade, especially on strengthening of national and regional policies on biodiversity for food and agriculture and promotion of cooperation in capacity development. It reviewed and revised the major outputs and milestones proposed for 2018-2027, and recommended them for consideration by the Commission. The Working Group also recommended to move the item on 'Access to genetic resources information and the sharing of benefits derived of it' from the Eighteenth to the Seventeenth Session.

22. The Working Group recommended that the Commission take into account the outcomes of the Report in its future work.

23. The Working Group considered the draft Strategic Plan and took note of the structural change proposed to it as well as the suggestion for its biannual review. It noted that the proposed strategic goals could increase the visibility of the Commission's work and align it with the FAO's Revised Strategic Framework, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the SDGs.

24. The Working Group noted that the proposed cross-sectoral strategic goals build on the strategic priority areas, long-term goals and targets of the existing global action plans on plant, animal and forest genetic resources. Indicators and procedures adopted by the Commission for the monitoring of the action plans may therefore, in principle, also be used for monitoring the cross-sectoral Strategic Goals.

25. The Working Group noted that using indicators already established for monitoring the existing action plans would avoid an additional reporting burden. It recommended that Goal 3 be reformulated to equally aim at the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

26. There was no other business.

VIII. ADOPTION

27. The report of the Working Group was adopted on 22 June 2016.

⁶ CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/5 Rev 1.

IX. CLOSING STATEMENTS

28. The Chair thanked the delegates, Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur, as well as the observers, for their important inputs and commended the Working Group for the recommendations adopted during the session that would strengthen the development of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* report and the management of AqGR at all levels. He acknowledged the work of FAO staff, including those working behind the scenes.

29. Mr Audun Lem, Deputy Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, appreciated the advice of the Working Group for advancing the aquaculture work programme of FAO. Ms Hoffmann, Secretary of the Commission, thanked the Working Group for the support given to the Commission's Strategic Plan and noted that *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* report will be another milestone for the Commission. She thanked the Chair for his leadership and the Government of Germany for the financial assistance provided in support of the attendance of delegates from developing countries in the session. Mr Matthias Halwart, Secretary of the Working Group, confirmed FAO's continued commitment to support countries' work on aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture.

APPENDIX A**AGENDA OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE**

1. Opening
2. Election of the Chair, the Vice-Chair(s) and the *Rapporteur*
3. Adoption of the agenda and timetable
4. Preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*
5. Report of the First Session of the Committee on Fisheries Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies
6. Access and benefit-sharing for aquatic genetic resources
7. Review of the Commission's Multi-Year Programme of Work
8. Any other business
9. Adoption of the Report

APPENDIX B**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

Working documents

CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/1	Provisional agenda
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/1 Add.1 Rev.1	Provisional annotated agenda and timetable
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/2 Rev.1	Preparation of the <i>State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture</i>
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/3	Summary of the report of the first session of the Committee on Fisheries Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/4	Elaboration of subsector-specific elements for access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources for food and agriculture
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/5 Rev.1	Review of implementation of the <i>Multi-Year Programme of Work</i> and draft <i>Strategic Plan for Commission on Genetic Resources for food and agriculture (2018–2027)</i>

Information documents

CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.1	Statutes of the Ad hoc Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources, and Members and Alternates elected by the Commission at its Fifteenth Regular Session
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.2	Draft State of the World's Report on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.3	Report of the Committee on Fisheries Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.4 Rev.1	List of documents
CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.5	List of delegates and observers

APPENDIX C

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES OF THE AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES, ELECTED AT
THE FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

<i>Composition (no. of countries per region)</i>	<i>Country</i>
Africa (5)	Cameroon Cape Verde Morocco Uganda South Africa <i>First Alternate:</i> Senegal <i>Second Alternate:</i> Namibia
Asia (5)	Bangladesh Cambodia Japan Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia <i>First Alternate:</i> Pakistan <i>Second Alternate:</i> Sri Lanka
Europe (5)	Czech Republic France Germany Norway Spain <i>First Alternate:</i> Poland <i>Second Alternate:</i> Hungary
Latin America and the Caribbean (5)	Argentina Brazil Guyana Panama Uruguay <i>First Alternate:</i> Jamaica
Near East (4)	Egypt Iran Kuwait Oman <i>First Alternate:</i> Saudi Arabia <i>Second Alternate:</i> Qatar
North America (2)	Canada United States of America
Southwest Pacific (2)	Palau Solomon Islands <i>First Alternate:</i> Tonga <i>Second Alternate:</i> Marshall Islands

APPENDIX D
**LIST OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS
LISTE DES DÉLEGUÉS ET OBSERVATEURS
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