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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

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Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

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

Mr Robert Moore
Director, Office of Evaluation
(Evaluation Report)
Tel (06) 570-53903

Mr Árni Mathiesen
Assistant Director-General
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
(Management Response)
Tel. (06) 570-56423

1. The *Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* was requested by the Programme Committee in April 2010,[1] and the Evaluation was initiated in 2011. This cover page provides a summary of the key issues for the attention and guidance of the Programme Committee on the attached report *Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* and the Management Response.

Evaluation report

2. The Evaluation found that FAO's performance has been highly commendable and the quality of its work consistently high. FAO's work in terms of contribution to the Millennium Development Goal 7 on environmental sustainability and to its own Global Goal on sustainable natural resource management has demonstrated adequate performance. However, the Evaluation's findings also showed that FAO has fallen short of its full potential. The main shortcomings have been:

i. a lack of strategy and priorities for Code development and support to the implementation of the Code;

ii. limited and mediocre outreach;

iii. inconsistent articulation between the normative and operational work including capacity development; and

iv. insufficient attention to the human capacity dimensions that are critical to implementation.

3. The Evaluation came to the conclusion that implementation of the Code is central for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management, and FAO. must re-align its strategic position and support the implementation of the Code in a more proactive manner.

4. The Code should become a living and meaningful source of inspiration for transformative change in fisheries and aquaculture: to achieve this, FAO must play a catalytic role in helping bridge the gap between the formal authority of the Code and its users.

5. The Evaluation proposed an overarching framework and formulated 16 recommendations, a few of which contain multiple actions, grouped under two headings: strategic approach to the implementation of the Code and specific CCRF themes.

Management Response

6. Management agrees with the Evaluation's conclusion that implementation of the Code is at the core of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture management, which is an important component of FAO's mandate and activities. Management also agrees that FAO has a catalytic role in helping the world bridge the gap between the formal authority of the Code and its users.

7. Management finds that the Evaluation report is well formulated, insightful and constructive and it concurs with most of the findings and recommendations presented. Out of the 16 main recommendations, 9 are accepted, 6 are partially accepted, and 1 is rejected. The recommendations generally mirror the approach undertaken by FAO in recent years, and they entail adjustments in strategic direction and changes in emphasis. The fact that not all recommendations are fully accepted, does not imply rejection of their underlying concepts, but rather constraints due to the practicality of their implementation.

Guidance sought

8. The Programme Committee may wish to provide its views and guidance on the key issues in the Evaluation report, and to the response to the recommendations and proposed follow-up actions by Management.

[1] CL 139/4 http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/018/k7985e.pdf