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**CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL
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COMMISSION**



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**SECRETARIAT REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE, OPERATIONAL AND
FINANCIAL ISSUES**

INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this document is to report on administrative, operational and financial actions taken during the 2012 intersessional period. It includes issues such as, meetings, publications, the status of membership to CACFish, the status of payment of the membership contributions to the autonomous budget, extra-budgetary contributions, and review of expenditures made in 2012.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

2. The CACFish Secretary, Raymon van Anrooy, was not able to undertake his full responsibilities following the Inaugural Session, as he was appointed to another post in the second half of 2011. During his absence, Mr Haydar Fersoy, of FAOSEC, undertook the emerging responsibilities and tasks of relevance in terms of operational matters of the Secretariat. He was assisted by Ms Kiyal Guzel (secretary/administrative assistant) and Ozgur Altan (aquaculture specialist under FishDev Central Asia). A new CACFish Secretary is expected to be appointed in the second half of 2013 after finalization of the process of recruitment of a Senior Fishery and Aquaculture Officer at FAO's Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (SEC).

3. The Secretariat at present has no separate headquarters. It still uses the premises and the staff of the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (FAOSEC) which is based at Ankara, Turkey. Besides, the Secretariat has not any professional post. Due to financial implications, the recruitment of professional CACFish staff is expected to be realized in a future when the Commission has a significantly larger budget.

4. During the intersessional period, using financial resources of FAOSEC, an administrative assistant (Ms Kiyal Guzel) worked part-time for the Secretariat. In the short-to medium term, the Secretariat is not expected to have professional staff paid for by the Commission.

Intersessional CACFish meetings

5. During the intersessional period the Secretariat organized one scheduled event that is the First Session of Technical Advisory Committee (Kiev, Ukraine; 17-19 November 2012).

6. Although the Second Session of CACFish was proposed to be held by end 2012 in Tajikistan, it was postponed to 2013 for organizational reasons.

External meetings at which the Commission was represented

7. The Commission was represented, by the First Vice-Chairperson, Mr Dogdurbek Dogochiev, at a side-event session to the Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 19th to 20th April 2012.

8. At the 30th Session of FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI), which was held from 9 to 13 July 2012 at Rome, Italy, Commission's poster was exhibited during the poster exhibition side event of the Session, where a number of reports published by SEC was also exhibited.

9. The Commission was represented at the Fourth Meeting of Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN-4), which was held in Rome on 13 July 2012. Participation of CACFish into the Network was welcomed. The meeting shared and information on themes and emerging issues of relevance to Regional Fisheries Bodies. Included were, climate change, child labor, Port State Measures, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, aquaculture, marine protected areas and inland fisheries. Financing and participatory matters, decision-taking mechanisms and ways of collaboration and cooperation between Regional Fishery Bodies were also tabled at the meeting.

10. The Commission was further represented at the Second Intersessional Aquaculture Group Meeting of Coordinating Working Party On Fisheries Statistics, which was organized in Rome on 14 July 2012. The Meeting reviewed the progress at global statistics forums including the United Nations Statistics Committee. The participating organizations are shared information of any developments relevant to aquaculture statistics. The meeting also revised the action plan for finalization of the aquaculture component of the Coordinating Working Party (CWP) Handbook.

11. The Secretariat was represented at the FAO Scoping Workshop on Regional Cooperation Programme for Responsible Aquaculture and Fisheries Development in the Central Asian and Caucasian Countries, which was organized in Urumqi, Xinjiang, China between 4 and 8 June 2012. The workshop aimed to develop a roadmap for revitalizing aquaculture and fisheries development in Central Asian and Caucasian region with an aim to identifying the development needs that could be better met by regional cooperation among Central Asian and Caucasian countries, and to explore areas for cooperation between China and its neighboring countries and among those countries themselves in the Central and South Asia. The cooperation framework formulated by the Workshop considered the Commission as the essential umbrella organization under which the proposed cooperation would be developed.

12. The Secretariat was also represented at Caspian Environmental Forum, a regional initiative which was organized by the Government of Turkmenistan, in Avaza, Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan between 5 and 6 November 2012. The biological and geocological status of Caspian Sea and associated environmental problems and challenges were the main issues that were tabled at the Forum. High level of representatives of the littoral Caspian Sea States (Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, UNDP, representatives of regional projects and oil companies were presented at the Forum. Under the Forum Session of “Conservation of biodiversity and use of biological resources of Caspian Sea”, Mr Fersoy made a presentation titled “Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission: A new regional platform for governance of fisheries in Central Asian and Caucasus region”.

Status of 5-year regional work programme (2011-2015) of the Commission

13. The regional work programme (RWP) of the Commission was not operational in 2012 due to the lack of an autonomous budget of Commission, as indicated on the doc (CACFish:II/2013/4). The adopted RWP foresees close collaboration and joint work with on-going FAO regional projects in the Commission Area. At that conjunction, the outputs of the activities of the Fish-Dev Central Asia Programme, currently the only on-going FAO regional fisheries project in the Central Asian and Caucasus region, contributed to a great degree to the objectives set down by the RWP. Being responsible for the coordination of the RWP and its activities, however, the Secretariat would like to underline a need for activation of the RWP by delivering specific and scheduled activities under it, recognizing the related budgetary implications. Such activation is considered of high importance to reach the outcomes set by the Commission for the RWP period.

Publications

14. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat produced the following two reports:

- Report of the Inaugural Session Report of Inaugural Session (Istanbul, Turkey; 19-21 December 2011); and (FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report no: 977) (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i2704b/i2704b00.htm>), and
- Report of the First Session of Technical Advisory Committee (FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report no: 1025)

15. Besides the CACFish reports, the Commission collaborated with the preparation of the following FAO Reports, which were almost finalized for pressing at the time of writing of this document:

- Guidelines on the Application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure in Aquaculture in the Central Asia and Caucasus Region, and
- Hygiene Requirements Controls and Inspections in Fisheries Marketing Chain.

Status of acceptance of CACFish Agreement

16. Status of membership to CACFish through the acceptance of CACFish Agreement remained unchanged during the intersessional period. So far, 4 States have become a member of the Commission by depositing their instruments of acceptance, namely Armenia (3

December 2010), Kyrgyzstan (3 May 2010), Tajikistan (9 March 2010), and Turkey (19 December 2011). It was reported that Azerbaijan had finalized Membership procedures by ratifying the CACFish Agreement in mid-November 2012. Azerbaijan ratified, towards the end of 2012, the CACFish Agreement in a parliamentary process and thus the country is expected to be a new member before the Second Session of CACFish.

17. In accordance with the decision of the Inaugural Session, a letter calling on Non-member CACFish States to consider becoming a party to the Commission through acceptance of Agreement was circulated by the Secretariat through diplomatic channels, on 27th June 2012, to the following 9 States: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Recommendations adopted under Article V of the CACFish

18. At its Inaugural Session (2011) the Commission adopted the scientific advice that was produced during the pre-establishment stage. The adopted advice included, as seen in the document CACFish:II/2013/Inf.4, suggestion with regards to (I) implementations of guidelines on Sturgeon Hatchery Practices and Hatchery Management for release (II) principles for restocking and culture-based fisheries in Central Asia (ecosystem compatibility, compatibility with other uses, best available science and information, social and economic benefits, collaboration with the culture production sector, the regulatory process, public information) (III) Better Management Practices for Carp Production in Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, and (IV) suggestion for development of regional data collection frameworks. As these scientific recommendations were submitted to the Commission in pursuant to the Article V of the CACFish, they are not of binding nature. Therefore no Recommendation has become effective during the intersessional session. That is because no notification was made to Members regarding enforcement status of adopted Recommendation. Similarly, there has been no any pending commitment from any Member States during the intersessional period.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Budget account for CACFish

19. A Trust fund account for CACFish was opened in September 2012. The Secretariat monitors the CACFish autonomous budget through the electronic budget system operated by FAO (based on Oracle).

20. In September 2012, following the operationalization of the CACFish Trust fund account, the Secretariat circulated a letter to CACFish Member States, asking them to make their 2012 contributions to the CACFish autonomous budget. Additionally an official letter was sent, through diplomatic channels, to 11 Non-CACFish Member States regarding possibility of making voluntary contribution to CACFish 2012 budget with the contributions figures adopted by the Commission at its Inaugural Session (i.e. Afghanistan: 2.403; Azerbaijan: USD 9154; China: USD 82.983; Georgia: USD 4.651; Iran: USD 9.940; Kazakhstan: USD 13.759; Mongolia: USD 4.650; Russian Federation: USD 14.804; Turkmenistan: USD 4.698; Ukraine: USD 4785; Uzbekistan: USD 4.680). The Secretariat

received only two official replies from 2 Non-CACFish Member States, namely China and Ukraine; the former stated its willingness for future cooperation while the latter reported the legislative difficulties in making voluntary financial contribution to an International Organization to which that State is not a Party.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Status of Contributions to autonomous CACFish budget

21. At its Inaugural Session, the Commission adopted an autonomous budget for 2012 amounting to 180 000 US dollars with 3 alternative budgeting modules the details of which are given in document CACFish:II/2013/2.

22. No membership contribution was deposited into the CACFish autonomous budget account in 2012. The 2012 autonomous budget therefore had a full negative balance at 31st December 2012. Status of 2012 Member Contributions is given in the Annex 1.

Payments and arrears

23. Financial regulations V (3) of the Commission states that “Contributions shall be due and payable in full within 30 days of the receipt of the communication of the Secretary”. It further states that “As of 1 January of the following calendar year, the unpaid balance of such contributions shall be considered to be one year in arrears”. In accordance with the second provision, 4 member states (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey) were in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions as of 31 December 2012. Although Kyrgyzstan reported its payment of contribution in January 2013, the contribution was not seen on the trust budget of CACFish at the time of writing of this document.

24. It should be noted that Article IX (7) of CACFish Agreement states that “A Party to this Agreement which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Commission shall have no vote in the Commission if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. The Commission may, nevertheless, permit such a Party to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay was due to conditions beyond the control of the Party but in no case shall it extend the right to vote beyond a further two calendar years”.

Expenditures under 2012 autonomous budget

25. No expenditure was made under the 2012 autonomous budget due to arrears of the Member States. Additionally, no voluntary contributions to the autonomous budget were received in 2012 in response to the letters that were sent to Non-Member CACFish States for voluntary contributions.

Extra-budgetary contributions

26. Turkey kindly provided USD 94.972 for organization of one activity scheduled for 2012, namely the First Session of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Second Session of Commission.

Expenditures under extra-budgetary contribution

27. The extra-budgetary contribution has been transferred to the CACFish trust fund. During the intersessional period a total expenditure of USD 23,438,63 was made under the extra-budgetary contribution, which was wholly used for the First Session of TAC, which was convened in Kiev, Ukraine from 20 to 22 November 2012.

Status of income and expenditures

28. Financial highlights for 2012 are given in Annex II.

SUGGESTED ACTION FOR THE COMMISSION

29. The Commission is invited to review the administrative report and provide general guidance, particularly on issues relating to autonomous budget and the 5-year regional work programme (2011-2015) of the Commission.

Annex I:

STATUS OF MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2012 (All figures in USD)

Members	Member contribution for 2012	Collected contribution for 2012	Outstanding 2012 contributions (arrears)
Armenia	4.669	-	4 669
Kyrgyzstan	2.400		2 400
Tajikistan	2.401	-	2 401
Turkey	14.020	-	14 020

SUMMARY 2012	
Total Member contributions (autonomous budget)	23 490
Total contributions collected	-
Contributions outstanding	23 490

Annex II:

Financial highlights for 2012 (as at 31 December 2012; all figures in USD)

BUDGET	
Hypothetical	180.000
Real budget*	23.490
INCOME	
Collected member contributions (autonomous Commission budget)	-
Extra-budgetary resources	94.972
Total income	94.972
EXPENDITURE	
Autonomous Commission budget	-
Extra-budgetary resources	23.438,63
Total expenditure	23.438,63
BUDGET UTILIZATION RATE	
Autonomous Commission budget (based on real budget)	0 %
Extra-budgetary resources	24,67 %
BALANCE	
<i>Autonomous Commission budget</i>	-180.000
Collected contribution vs hypothetical budget	
Collected contribution vs real budget	-23.490
<i>Extra-budgetary resources</i>	
Extra-budgetary contribution vs expenditures	71.533,37

* Total share contribution of Member States (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) in hypothetical budget, which calculated on the 15 States (4 Member States plus 11 Non-CACFish Member States, including China)