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RECENT EFFORTS BY FAO REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES IN RESPONSIBLE AQUACULTURE AND CULTURE-BASED FISHERIES

SUMMARY

This paper summarizes recent efforts by FAO regional fishery bodies (RFBs) in promoting responsible aquaculture and culture-based fisheries. These RFBs pursue a wide range of technical activities on aquaculture and culture-based fisheries, in particular through several expert working groups, workshops, symposia, etc. Many of these bodies are addressing some of the key priority areas for future work identified at the First Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. In addition to FAO RFBs, there are a number of organizations whose work is directly or indirectly linked to aquaculture and culture-based fisheries. Many of these organizations and institutions collaborate in partnership with FAO RFBs in undertaking their task. The work of these non-FAO bodies has not been highlighted in this document.

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO RFBs involved in aquaculture and culture-based fisheries are the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC), the Committee for Inland Fisheries of Africa (CIFA), the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL), the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI). In addition to these bodies, the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as well as the FISH INFO network, a network of intergovernmental bodies with links to the FAO Fisheries Department which addresses issues related to fish trade, also undertakes work relevant to aquaculture and culture-based fisheries.

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2. Several international, regional and sub-regional organizations are actively involved in aquaculture and culture-based fisheries. Many of these bodies work closely with FAO RFBs in their respective geographical area. These bodies include:

1. Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA)
2. Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)
3. Mekong River Commission (MRC)
4. South Pacific Permanent Commission (CPPS)
5. Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Organization
6. Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC)
7. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
8. WorldFish Center (WFC – formerly ICLARM)
9. Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)
10. Asian Fisheries Society (AFS)
11. World Aquaculture Society (WAS)
12. Southern African Development Community (SADC)
13. European Aquaculture Society (EAS)
14. Federation of Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)
15. Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development (OLDEPESCA)

3. An account of recent, ongoing and foreseen activities by FAO RFBs follows.

European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC)

4. Following the 1998 EIFAC Symposium on Water for Sustainable Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture, the EIFAC Working Party on Aquatic Resources Management in Aquaculture in 2000 had presented to the Twenty-first Session of EIFAC an overview of information sources and management experiences on aquaculture and aquatic resources management in the European context. More recent efforts focused on continuation of work on three main topics including production and water statistics; resources economics, and aquaculture management options. An Ad hoc Working Party meeting is foreseen during the European Aquaculture Society (EAS) Conference which will be held in August 2003, in Trondheim, Norway.

5. The EIFAC Working Party on Organic Fish Farming is working on the status and development of organic fish farming, including technical aspects of organic production, market conditions and research needs. There is growing interest in a number of countries to develop organic fish farming. In some countries there is a lack of information on related criteria and standards. There is a general need for uniform principles for recognizing fish farms and farming practices which meet the criteria of organic fish farming. EIFAC repeatedly reiterated the need for scientific bases for such criteria and related certification requirements. A scoping meeting of the Working Party was held in February 2002 in conjunction with the Conference of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). Presently, the Working Party is compiling additional information, also for presentation to the INFOFISH Conference on Organic Aquaculture and Sea Farming to be held in late 2003.

6. Recently a joint EIFAC/GFCM Working Party on Management of Sturgeon was established. At its Twenty-first Session, EIFAC felt that specific attention should be paid by the Working Party to the review of the state-of-art of stock assessment methods and their suitability for sturgeon stock assessment, and to the specific role of aquaculture for restoration of natural stocks as well as a means to relieve catch pressure from natural stocks. Restocking and reintroduction programmes conducted elsewhere in Europe, having impact on fisheries management practices, should also be considered by the Working Party. In this context, it may be noted that EIFAC's Code of Practice for Stocking and Introductions is being updated.

7. It is envisaged that the Ad hoc Working Party would also pay attention to Northern Aegean sturgeon stocks.

8. The Working Party on Fish Diseases and Control has not been active since the EIFAC/EAfp (European Association of Fish Pathologists) Workshop on Carp and Sturgeon Health Management (held in 1999 in Rhodos, Greece), and it is hoped that the proceedings of this workshop will be finalized and published in 2003.

9. The Joint EIFAC/EC Working Party on Market Perspectives of European Freshwater Aquaculture Products, met in 2001 on the premises of the European Commission, and produced a report and proceedings. The Working Party was instrumental in the organization of the International Conference on Aquaculture Economics and Marketing, held in October 2002 at Szarvas, Hungary.

10. The EIFAC Technical Secretariat assisted the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) in the preparation of a Code of Conduct for European Aquaculture. The EIFAC Secretariat also participated in a Workshop on "Tools for measuring fisheries policy aiming at a sustainable ecosystem" (Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture indicators), organized in 2002 by the European Environment Agency in collaboration with the European Commission's DG Fisheries and DG Environment.

11. The EIFAC Working Party on Handling of Fishes in Fisheries and Aquaculture will synthesize currently available scientific information on animal welfare issues and related discussions concerning the two sub-sectors. A compilation of basic scientific knowledge on the effects of handling of fishes in fisheries and aquaculture (including fishing methods, harvesting, holding and rearing, use of anaesthetics, slaughter) is being prepared. In addition, information is being collated on available related training programmes, existing codes of practice and guidance in EIFAC member countries, current and proposed legislation and regulation on handling in fisheries and aquaculture and in experimental settings in EIFAC member countries (including EU regulations). A workshop of the Working Party is being prepared for November 2003. Besides information exchange the workshop will consider whether it is useful to develop codes of practice on handling of fishes in fisheries and aquaculture, which can be used for regulation of practice in the EIFAC member countries.

12. In May 2004, EIFAC will hold a Symposium on "Aquaculture Development – Partnership between Science and Producer Associations", in Poland (Wierzba, Mazurian Lakeland), in connection with the Twenty-third Session of EIFAC. This Symposium will discuss the evolving roles and expectations of aquaculture producers, scientists, and other stakeholders in aquaculture, with a view to identifying further opportunities for collaboration on sustainable aquaculture development in Europe. The Symposium is being supported by the European Aquaculture Society (EAS) and the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP).

Committee for Inland Fisheries of Africa (CIFA)

13. In 1999, the FAO Regional Office for Africa through a participatory process elaborated the Africa Regional Aquaculture Review which was published as a CIFA document and forms the framework for the aquaculture development programme in the region. It is expected that a second regional review will take place in 2004/05.

14. The Eleventh Session of CIFA held in 2000 addressed present aquaculture issues in the form of commercial aquaculture and integrated irrigation/aquaculture. This latter subject was further defined in a Programme Profile for a regional intervention in West Africa that was endorsed by CIFA. At that Session, the Committee established ad hoc working groups to focus on specific aspects of aquaculture development. The Ad hoc Working Group on Aquaculture in the Sahel will be held in Bamako, Mali, in October 2003

15. CIFA has been proposed, additionally, to function as a focal point for a number of regional aquaculture matters. These generally deal with intra- and inter-regional networking and information exchange. A specific proposal has been made to use CIFA as a venue for collaboration between FAO and the WorldFish Center (WFC - formerly ICLARM) with respect to coordinated aquaculture research in the Africa region. Some preliminary meetings have taken place on this subject.

16. The Committee held its Twelfth Session in December 2002 and reiterated the high potential for commercial aquaculture development in the region as well as the growing interest to develop this sector. It was noted that donor and government focus in aquaculture had traditionally been in the smallholder sub-sector, promoting aquaculture as a cheap source of animal protein leaving out economic incentives from aquaculture. Consequently, commercial aquaculture had been left out and was equally in need of support for development.

17. At the Session there was unanimous agreement that Africa possesses a wealth of aquatic biodiversity that must be used sustainably. Several delegates acknowledged that there was a lack of research on and knowledge of many indigenous African species. The development of such species for aquaculture would serve as a viable alternative to the introduction of alien species. Furthermore, it was noted that work on domestication, genetic improvement and brood stock management will be needed to turn wild African aquatic resources into viable resources for sustainable aquaculture. The Committee highlighted the need for additional research on African species that might have aquaculture potential.

18. The following are some of the main recommendations of the Twelfth Session:

16. Relevant codes of practice, guidelines and conventions be adapted and applied for future introductions as a precautionary measure to prevent potential negative impacts;
17. Indigenous species with proven aquaculture potential should be genetically improved through research and domesticated with proven capacity for brood stock management;
18. Countries should incorporate and adapt relevant international guidelines and codes of practice for responsible introductions into their national legislation with technical guidance from FAO and other international organizations.

Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL)

19. The Ninth Session of the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL) was held in San Salvador (El Salvador), in January 2003. The Commission reviewed the situation of inland fisheries and aquaculture in the region, including their management and achievements in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

20. The Commission:

19. Recommended that FAO play a key facilitating role in support of national and regional efforts towards the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, including the preparation of technical guidelines for inland fisheries and aquaculture, and capacity-building of human resources at technical, fishers and/or fish-farmers level;
20. Agreed that, in order to overcome negative effects of increased competition over land and water use, the utilization of regulatory instruments, such as the planning of land and water use, should be promoted, and that inland fisheries and aquaculture should be integrated into these instruments;
21. Recommended that the basin management approach, integrating inland fisheries and aquaculture with wide participation of stake-holders and inter-institutional coordination, should be promoted between member countries;

22. Considered that appropriate management approaches should be complemented by other measures aiming at the reduction of human pressure over fisheries' resources and the relocation of fishers to aquaculture activities, or through the generation of alternative sources of employment and income;
23. Recognized that sustainable development was possible only through responsible inland fisheries and aquaculture and that sector policies, integrated to macro-economic policies, were needed with active government involvement and the utilization of proper instruments at hand;
24. Recommended that national fisheries' policies be reviewed, giving due attention to inland fisheries and aquaculture.
21. Within the framework of the Ninth Session of COPESCAL a "Seminar on Management of Fisheries in Large Rivers and Reservoirs in Latin America" was held on 29 January 2003. The Seminar was financed by FISHCODE, the FAO Fisheries Department Global Partnership Programme for implementing the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The participants reviewed the situation of fisheries management including aquaculture in large rivers and dams in the region.
22. The conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar were endorsed by the Commission and the main ones related to aquaculture were:
25. policies to improve management in inland fisheries and aquaculture should consider a review of regulations, fisheries and aquaculture research and the coordination and cooperation between scientific institutions;
26. policies and projects for management and development in large rivers, dams and other freshwater reservoirs should pay attention to the conservation of fish resources and that aquaculture projects should be encouraged as an alternative to relocate fishers;
27. bilateral and multilateral consultation and cooperation between neighbouring countries, as well as arrangements, should be pursued for research and management in trans-boundary dams;
28. capacity-building and technical assistance efforts should be intensified aiming at the application and dissemination of the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries regarding inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture in the region.
23. The FAO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean organized in May 2002 in Panama City, Panama, a "Meeting on the improvement of different kinds of rural aquaculture towards rural sustainable development". The purpose of the meeting was to identify strategies and mechanisms to strengthen the structure and achievements of the existing Latin American Small-scale Rural Aquaculture Network (Red-ARPE).
24. The Meeting recommended:
29. an expansion of the Network to enhance its geographical coverage;
30. partnerships be established with NGOs and the private sector (at present only academic institutions and governments are in the Network);
31. ARPE should intensify its efforts in disseminating results of lessons learnt; and
32. adoption of sustainable livelihoods approaches in promoting the activities of the Network.
25. The Meeting also established a working group to formulate a project to obtain financial resources for the network and constituted a small group to draft the rules and regulations of the Network.
26. Within the framework of a Technical Cooperation Project FAO is providing assistance to a number of countries (Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador,

Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela) to develop a programme for improving health, sanitary status and quality of hatchery-produced shrimp post-larvae; to improve farmer capacity in disease control and health management in shrimp culture and to develop and establish an information system on aquatic animal health aiming to providing information required during the movement of live animals, specially to reduce trans-boundary pathogen movement. The Project which started in May 2001 has contributed to improving the quality of shrimp post-larvae from hatcheries in Latin American countries, enhanced regional technical standards for good shrimp hatchery health management and strengthened national expertise in health management in shrimp through demonstration and the organization of workshops. It is planned to establish a regional information system on aquatic pathogens, quarantine and health for shrimp culture.

Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)

27. At its Twenty-sixth Session in 1998 the Commission abolished its four standing working parties and replaced them with ad hoc working groups. The work of the two working groups whose activities are relevant to aquaculture and culture-based fisheries is summarized below.

28. The Ad hoc Working Group of Experts in Rural Aquaculture met in October 1999. This meeting represented a step forward from the FAO/NACA Expert Consultation on Sustainable Aquaculture for Rural Development held in March 1999 in Chiang Rai, Thailand. Most of the members of the Working Group had been selected from experts who had participated in the FAO/NACA Expert Consultation to promote coordination in the region, to build on previous work and to avoid wasting resources. The Working Group reviewed the contribution of small-scale aquaculture to rural development; identified opportunities and constraints to rural aquaculture; and made recommendations to the Commission.

29. The Working Group *inter alia*:

33. noted that the main aims of rural aquaculture were to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor and to promote food security in rural areas;
34. further noted that poverty alleviation is a complex task and requires action expressed through wide-ranging policy initiatives aimed at the rural poor. In this context, aquaculture can contribute significantly to livelihoods of the rural poor if mediating institutions operate equitably;
35. pointed out the need to raise the awareness of policy makers and planners of the potential that aquaculture holds in rural development and to encourage its incorporation into rural development schemes. (The documentation of successful approaches and methodologies, lessons learned, etc. at all levels: policy, institutions, communities, farms, etc. would help in this process);
36. recognized that the contribution of rural aquaculture to development in the region is uneven and stated that significant unfulfilled potential exists for the expansion of aquaculture in many countries if constraints to its further development were addressed;
37. further recognized that knowledge is available, but extension of knowledge is a problem. The major constraints to rural aquaculture fulfilling its potential contribution to development are the limited knowledge and capacity of both farmers and service providers from extension workers to policy makers;
38. emphasized that poor households farm fish in areas of Asia where it is traditional practice but that there is also a wide range of opportunities to integrate aquaculture within existing farming systems in countries with and without a tradition in aquaculture;
39. further emphasized that poor farming households require extensive and extended institutional support to adopt aquaculture, although aquaculture has eventually to function as a private sector activity without government or project support if it is to be sustainable;

40. acknowledged that diverse generic technologies exist for rural aquaculture for example land-based systems such as rice/fish and pond culture, and water-based systems such as enhanced fisheries and cage culture in inland areas, and in water-based systems involving culture of molluscs and seaweeds in coastal areas;
41. further acknowledged that relatively low-value herbivorous fish cultured integrated with agriculture contribute most to rural aquaculture. However, it was noted that, in some cases, small-scale farmers are encouraged to culture high-value species when culture of lower value species is not profitable (e.g. culture of some carp species in the People's Republic of China).
42. suggested that intensive cage culture may be one of the few options for the landless and poor fishers to benefit from aquaculture in inland water bodies and in coastal areas.

30. It was agreed that both producers and consumers should be considered, and some members felt that the latter should also include poor urban consumers and in consequence, the Working Group suggested a new definition for rural aquaculture: "Rural aquaculture contributes to the alleviation of poverty directly through small-scale household farming of aquatic organisms for domestic consumption and/or income; or indirectly through employment of the poor as service providers to aquaculture, as workers on aquatic farms of better-off farmers, and/or by providing low-cost fish for poor rural and urban consumers".

31. There was a consensus in the Working Group that there is a need for more people-centred development. This requires a new professionalism of service providers to empower local communities and the poor. The Working Group also agreed that enabling policy and institutional frameworks are required, as well as greater use of a farming systems research and extension approach to assess grass roots' needs and resources, to identify and adapt technologies to local contexts, and to extend them widely to potential beneficiaries. This will require institutions such as the Departments of Fisheries to develop either increasing capacity in the social sciences to complement the current predominance of natural scientists, or to acquire it by forging partnerships with national institutions.

32. The APFIC Ad hoc Working Group of Experts in Food Safety was convened in March 1999 in response to the principal recommendation of APFIC Symposium on Fish Utilization in the Asia-Pacific Region, which was held in conjunction with the Twenty-sixth Session of the Commission.

33. The recommendation recognized the urgent need for a regional programme of research to address three serious emerging food safety issues associated with sustainable and safe fish production in the region. These issues are:

43. Human parasitic infestations caused by fish consumption.
44. Pathogenic (disease-causing) bacteria associated with fish products.
45. Emerging safety hazards in the products of aquaculture as a result of intensification of culture systems.

34. The Working Group aimed to encourage the formulation and conduct of a regional integrated research programme and to report progress to the Twenty-seventh Session of the Commission. The envisaged programme would quantify current and potential health hazards and risks associated with consumption of fish products; and develop sustainable strategies to mitigate the effects. It was understood that the programme would require external funding (for which donor support has yet to be found).

35. Immediately following the Working Group meeting there was a workshop on the issue of parasitic infestations caused by trematodes. The workshop gave the opportunity for a detailed analysis of the problem and the formulation of a proposal for research. The discussions relating specifically to aquaculture are summarized below:

46. Although products from marine capture fisheries in the region have a generally good history of safety there are concerns that with increasing intensification of aquaculture new problems may arise. Asia accounts for the overwhelming proportion (over 90 percent) of world aquaculture production and there are some projections that half of the food fish supply will be produced by culture early in the next century. Assurance of the safety and quality of the products is therefore vital.
47. Potential problems in the domestic markets could occur through trematode infestation, sustained by the use of human and animal wastes for fertilization and the continuation of traditional food habits. These problems have been reviewed for the production sector as a whole but they are of particular relevance to the rapidly expanding aquaculture industry.
48. High value products, such as those for export, are produced under much more controlled conditions but still the problems of the presence of pathogens and their virulence need to be addressed. Of particular concern is the emergence in recent years of a pattern of resistance to antibiotics by disease causing organisms. Although there is little direct proof, in the minds of many, that the increasing frequency of resistance has been associated with the excessive use of antibiotics in intensive aquaculture systems.
49. In the past, antibiotics were used prophylactically in the feed and, although today use has decreased, large quantities are still employed for the purposes of controlling fish health. The resistance can easily be transferred both to fish pathogens and human pathogens, causing eventual difficulties in chemotherapy. Although it has yet to be established whether the emergence of antibiotic resistance is due to aquaculture practices (there is also widespread misuse of antibiotics in the medical and veterinary fields) the extent of the responsibility of aquaculture needs to be studied.
50. Importantly since these recommendations were made, the issue of antibiotic residues has strongly impacted on the Asian aquaculture trade and remedial measures are coming into place. However serious differences of opinion between developed and developing countries exist regarding the harmonization of standards regarding residues and testing.

Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)

36. In the ambit of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), the FAO Sub-Regional Office in Barbados organized a Sub-Regional Workshop to Promote Sustainable Aquaculture Development in the Small Island Developing States of the Lesser Antilles in November 2002. The Workshop analysed the political, legal and institutional requirements necessary to promote the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Lesser Antilles. The main conclusion was that countries should develop policies and institutional capacity that focus on the integrated development of aquaculture for food security purposes and for the diversification of agriculture. Countries agreed to promote regional cooperation and the exchange of technology, experiences and information.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

37. Under the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture (GFCM/CAQ), three active regional networks are in operation: (1) the network on Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean Countries (SIPAM); (2) the Network on Technology and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (TECAM); and the Network on Socio-Economic and Legal Aspects of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean. The SIPAM Network is fully operational and working through the Regional Centre located in Tunis, Tunisia, and national centres in the 16

participating countries. Its activities and work programme are discussed and determined regularly at the meetings of the National Coordinators and also at the Steering Committee meetings.

38. SIPAM is the only current regional Mediterranean and Black Sea Information System dedicated to the aquaculture sector. The visibility of the SIPAM databases until the first half of 2002 was rather low with little dissemination of data outside the SIPAM national contacts. The growth of the Internet provided the opportunity for SIPAM to increase its visibility and to be in a position to offer updated information. This resulted in the creation of the SIPAM portal (www.faosipam.org), which is currently being improved in order to allow an on-line addition of information and overall linkage with the FAO Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS – www.fao.org/fi/figis). This service has been provided under the Regular Programme budget of the FAO Fisheries Department. The SIPAM portal has been designed to host selected entry windows to partners with interest in the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions. The main purpose of the sub-portals is to assist SIPAM web users with the rapid tracing of targeted information relative to the development of aquaculture in the region.

39. The TECAM and SELAM networks are coordinated by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) which has been organizing its activities through the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (IAMZ) in Spain with the close collaboration and financial support of the FAO Fisheries Department. A series of regional training courses, seminars and workshops are held annually with invited and sponsored participants.

40. The Third Session of GFCM/CAQ held in September 2002 discussed the progress of its three networks and the proposed programme of work for 2002-2004. The programme of the networks formulated by GFCM/CAQ was approved by the Commission at its Twenty-seventh Session in November 2002. Among the main activities of the networks currently undertaken is the elaboration of a regional aquaculture project proposal for discussion among GFCM Members to be submitted to potential donors.

41. GFCM and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) have established a Joint Ad hoc Working Group on Sustainable Tuna Farming/Fattening in the Mediterranean. The principal aim of the Working Group is to collect information on current practices of tuna farming in the Mediterranean and eventually to discuss and develop recommendations on this rapidly expanding aquaculture activity. The Ad hoc Working Group held its first meeting in Rome, Italy, from 12 to 14 May 2003.

COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade

42. At its Eighth Session held in February 2002, the Sub-Committee addressed several issues relevant to aquaculture:

51. The Sub-Committee recognized that international trade statistics do not distinguish between aquaculture products and wild products. FAO plans to work with the World Customs Organization on the modification of this, in order to permit the correct classification of products;
52. Under the rules of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), aquaculture products would fall within the look-alike provision unless tagged or marked, therefore made "readily recognisable". The different treatment allowed to readily recognisable aquaculture specimens needs to be considered in the light of the World Trade Organization (WTO) principle of similar treatment of "like" products. FAO proposes to hold an Expert Consultation to address these issues in late 2004 and early 2005.

43. The FISH INFO network - INFOFISH, INFOPECHE, EUROFISH, INFOPESCA, INFOSAMAK, INFOYU and GLOBEFISH - have carried out or are undertaking a number of projects in which aquaculture products play an important role:

53. INFOFISH organized the world's first tilapia trade conference in 2001, and is about to organize the world's first organic aquaculture conference.
 54. INFOPESEA is carrying out a project which aims at improving the value-addition to farmed tilapia in Brazil and Venezuela.
 55. GLOBEFISH published various market reports on farmed products, such as seabass, seabream and salmon.
 56. FAO organized with INFOSAMAK an "Expert Consultation on Fish Trade and Food Security", in Casablanca, Morocco, in January 2003 at which the role of aquaculture with respect to food security was highlighted.
44. In keeping with the recommendation of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Committee on Fisheries in February 2003 and the request of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade at its Eighth Session for increased collaboration between the Sub-Committees on Fish Trade and Aquaculture, the major items on the agenda such as CITES, eco-labelling, traceability, safety and quality of fish and fishery products for the Ninth Session, as appropriate, would address aspects relevant to aquaculture products.

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

45. The Sub-Committee is invited to provide guidance on how FAO regional fishery bodies could restructure their work in order to contribute effectively to the mandate of the Sub-Committee.