



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES

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PROGRAMME OF WORK AND COMMISSION BUDGET FOR 2019-2020

Executive summary

This document sets out Commission's proposed inter-sessional 2019-2021 work programme for discussion and decision making, as identified by the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) (February 2019); and the Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA). The present document contains an estimate of the cost to implement the proposed programme of work and its activities. As at 21 March 2019, the Commission had a usable balance of USD 34,683. The proposed Programme of Work of the Commission however, needs an estimated 140, 000 dollars, a level that could not be met by the autonomous budget of the Commission considering the fact that the arrears has reached its highest level at 160,036 dollars, as detailed in the reference document RECOFI/X/2019/2.

Suggested Action by the Commission

The Commission is invited to:

- Consider the proposed provisional work programme,
- Take note that amount in arrears has reached its peak level
- Consider the need of RECOFI annual budget increase,
- Determine which activities should get priority support from the RECOFI budget, and
- Suggest additional items to add to the work programme

INTRODUCTION

1. The full Programme of the Work of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) includes activities that must be performed by the WGFM, WGA, by the Members at national levels, and by any other ad hoc working group that RECOFI may deem necessary to establish, on a temporary or longer-term basis.

ASSUMPTIONS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Assumptions

2. The following assumptions, which have budgetary implications, are made for consideration by the Commission:

- The estimated budget principally relies on Member's contributions to the budget of RECOFI,
- Members will pay annual contributions when due and will settle their arrears,
- Subsidiary bodies of the Commission (i.e. WGFM and WGA) will be adequately supported in order to address in a timely manner the various logistic aspects for the organization of the meetings and activities planned for the next inter-sessional period,
- Members will make every effort to provide the Secretariat with the data and information requested to support the work of its subsidiary bodies,
- Members will support the work of the FAO Secretariat in a timely and efficient manner to ensure the quality and completeness of the activities conducted and the products produced,
- Members will effectively support the work of national scientists, experts, administrators and RECOFI National and WGFM/WGA Focal Points and will guarantee the costs of all national inputs associated with the Commission's programme of work, including those related to the Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS),
- Within the limits of the current fixed annual budget, the Commission could not be financially self-sufficient unless direct external financial resources are made available,
- The Commission will strive to increase its annual budget to a more comfortable and sustainable level for effective functioning,
- FAO will maintain to the extent possible the technical backstopping capacity in support to the Commission, and
- The Commission will continue to receive logistic and administrative support from FAO, directly via its Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (SEC).

Uncertainties

3. The adopted scale of the RECOFI budget is based on a fixed USD 5,000 yearly contribution by each Member, amounting to a total annual budget of USD 40,000. This level of budget has been proven to be insufficient to carry out the activities of the Commission. The Programme of Work formulated by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission envisages financial requirements that cannot be funded through the current annual Members' contributions only. This element of uncertainty is not taken into consideration in the proposed draft budget as it should be discussed and assessed by the Commission. On the other hand, the current high level of arrears, which was amounted to 160,036.04 USD as at 21 March 2019, is posing a greater risk to the effectiveness of delivery of the programme of work of the Commission.

4. IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF 2019—2021 INTER-SESSIONAL WORK PROGRAMME

5. All RECOFI Work Programme activities planned for the previous intersessional work programme were fully took place with some changes in delivery dates and location. The delivered activities are detailed in the following other reference documents: RECOFI/X/2019/2; RECOFI/X/2019/3; RECOFI/X/2019/4

and RECOFI/X/2019/5. The main reason behind this full delivery of planned activities is the fact that the Commission reduced the number of activities to an affordable level.

COMMISSION'S PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2019-2021 INTER-SESSIONAL PERIOD

6. The provisional 2019-2021 inter-sessional work programme of the Commission includes the activities proposed by its subsidiary bodies, namely WGFM and WGA and a regular biannual meeting of the Commission. The Annex 1 of this document presents the general descriptions of each proposed activity and related budget information.

INDICATIVE RECOFI BUDGET FOR 2019–2020

7. In accordance with the provisions of Article VII and IX of the RECOFI Agreement, before making any decision involving expenditures in connection with the implementation of the approved work plan for the intersession period, including the establishment of committees and working groups and the recruitment or appointment of specialists, the Commission shall have available the basic information on the financial implications thereof.

8. The budgetary requirements estimated for the intersessional biennium would contribute to support the organization of the meetings of the Commission's subsidiary bodies, and related requirements, such as specialized experts and qualified consultants for specific tasks or publications. Other Secretariat related costs, such as the FAO technical support services and travel costs, are not included and could be charged to the Commission's budget depending on circumstances.

9. The proposed Programme of Work of the Commission is provided in Appendix 1. It includes the Programme of Work formulated by the technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission in addition to a regular session of Commission (i.e. eleventh session of the Commission in 2021). As at 21 March 2019, the Commission had a usable balance of USD 34,683. The proposed Programme of Work of the Commission however, needs an estimated 140,000 dollars, a level that could not be met by the autonomous budget of the Commission considering the fact that the arrears has reached its highest level at 160,036 dollars, as detailed in the reference document RECOFI/X/2019/2 (Report on the Financial and Administrative Affairs of the Commission for the Intersessional Period 2017-2019).

10. The current level of members' contributions for the next biennium (i.e. 2019-2020) would amount to USD 80,000. Should members pay all their overdue contributions, this would make another USD 160,036 available. Thus the total theoretical budget totals to USD 200,036.

11. The current level of RECOFI budget has proven insufficient to carry out the activities of Commission. In addition, the arrears continue to pose an additional challenge to the RECOFI budget and its operations. Therefore, the Secretariat sees it as essential to increase annual RECOFI budget scale

Appendix 1:

Proposed Programme of Work of RECOFI for the Intersessional Period 2019-2021

Activity	Tentative date	Location	Duration (days)	Indicative cost (USD)*	Priority
<i>WGFM: Technical Activities/Workshops</i>					
Regional joint assessment of kingfish stock	Feb 2021	Oman	3	25,000	1 st
Development of a monitoring programme for socio-economic parameters for use in fisheries management (follow-up to the outcome of the socioeconomic workshop held in Bahrain in 2012)	TBD	TBD	3	20,000	2 nd
<i>Regular biannual meeting</i>					
12 th meeting of the WGFM	Feb 2021	Oman		15,000	
<i>WGA: Technical Activities/Workshops</i>					
Technical workshop on marine spatial planning, including consultancy service for development of guidelines for marine cage selection (joint workshop)	2019	Oman	5	25,000	
Regional workshop on harmonized RECOFI aquaculture data collection, reporting and dissemination in line with internationally established standards	Dec 2019	TBD	3	20,000	
Advancement of Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS)				15,000	
<i>Regular biannual meeting</i>					
9 th Meeting of WGA	End 2019		1 (Back-to-back with a workshop)		
<i>RECOFI: Regular biannual session</i>					
11 th Session of RECOFI	May 2021	TBD	3	20,000	
Grand budget				140,000	

* The indicative budget includes consultancy fees, documents printing and dispatching, travel and DSA. These may vary depending on where the activity is organized in the region and who is invited to implement it.