

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK**Sixth Meeting****Rome, 9 and 15 July 2016****OUR FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE KNOWLEDGE BASE -
A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE**

The Fishery and Aquaculture knowledge base is a public or access-restricted pool of information available as a coherent package of knowledge for easy access by the fisheries and aquaculture community.

Historically, FAO has always created and shared critical information about food, agriculture and natural resources in the form of global public goods served through a knowledge network with the ultimate goal to support global societal objectives.

Activities of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department stem its vision and mission statements.

Vision: A world in which responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources makes an appreciable contribution to human well-being, food security and poverty alleviation.

Mission: To strengthen global governance and the managerial and technical capacities of members and to lead consensus-building towards improved conservation and utilization of aquatic resources.

Today FAO can make the difference to achieve the vision by surfing this information age enabling rich knowledge building and management. Here the objective to support the Sustainable Development Goals become possible.

In this context, the ever growing amount of information which has been collected, collated and disseminated in the last twenty years constitutes our joint Fishery and Aquaculture knowledge base with the hope to serve more and more interested communities.

A considerable amount of information originates from Regional Fishery Bodies (hereinafter referred to as 'RFBs') under different agreements of provision.

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RSN members are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings. RSN related documents can be accessed at <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/40832/en>, in order to minimize environmental impact and promote greener communications.

Some examples of collective knowledge of global relevance:

- RFB fact sheets and map viewer
- Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) / Statlant questionnaires
- Stocks & Fisheries (FIRMS Partnership)
- Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems database
- Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks
- Fishery and Aquaculture Country Profiles (FACP) and National Aquaculture Sector Overviews (NASOs)
- Global Record of Fishing Vessels
- Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels (CLAV)
- Atlas of Tuna and Billfish Catches
- Global Tuna Nominal Catches

The need of shared information relevant to the aquaculture sector is also an emerging issue and several initiatives are running in FAO in collaboration with EU funded projects (iMarine) as well as with IT firms including Google, for boosting the use of satellite base imagery. Among various, the semi-automated inventory of aquaculture farms is a promising activity in the short term.

The fact sheets on National Aquaculture Sector Overviews (NASOs) are an example of fruitful collaboration established in recent years among FAO, GFCM and SIPAM¹ Member countries in ensuring efficient aquaculture information exchanges to better monitor status and trend of aquaculture at the national and regional levels.

These databases contribute to the overall Fishery and Aquaculture knowledge base which goes beyond the boundaries of FAO and embraces the community in the form of collective knowledge.

Several are the benefits for such information gathering and mutual exchange, the overall partners' return on investment from FAO disseminating third party information include credibility, reliability, neutrality, as well as high visibility. Data owners and data providers can benefit from global data services in fisheries exposed under a common data sharing policy.

IT technologies and web access evolve rapidly and steadily, a new paradigm for managing information is thus needed to properly handle the various formats in which the information is stored and the knowledge is captured, from a hard copy publication to a dynamic database updated in close-to-real time. The new paradigm needs to cope with information collected/collated/disseminated through desktop, laptop, smartphones, tablets etc. up to wearable devices. And the community expects to consume more and more data provided in a timely manner.

Today data consistency and reliability are universally accepted as a must to which all providers are committed. So nowadays which is the new challenge? The answer is timeliness: the rapidity and efficiency of the information flows make the difference and drive users in selecting their preferred content providers. Timeliness is envisaged as a key factor in the new paradigm which contributes to the image of an authoritative source of information.

To that, the FAO-FI department is committed to produce databases of information and update them as frequently as possible. The good cooperation of the partners is a key factor and clear commitments are needed. To date, beyond countries, more than twenty RFBs and other institutions are contributing in

¹ SIPAM: Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean Region

different ways to the Fishery and Aquaculture knowledge base, examples of shared information and related RFBs involvement under different types of data provision arrangements are provided in Table 1.

In order to foster timely updates, there is a need to imagine and consolidate new business models in joint efforts, keeping in mind that ensuring the effective reutilization of the information and the data acquired can also attract global donors interested in contributing to the collective knowledge on fisheries and aquaculture and to its impact.

Actions for the RSN

- The RSN is invited to comment on the above focusing on the recognition of the statements enunciated. Any indication on further forms of return on investment is also welcome.
- The RSN is invited to confirm the overall will to contribute to the collective knowledge on fisheries and aquaculture, and to indicate any will to commit to timeliness in the provision of information contributions wherever these have been agreed. Indication of constraints preventing timeliness will enable collaborative thinking and suggestions to resolve timeliness issues.
- The RSN might suggest actions to move forward. I.e. to involve those RFBs so far not yet directly involved in contributions, to investigate other areas of intervention where shared information could make the difference, etc.

Table 1: Examples of shared information and related RFBs involvement under different types of data provision arrangements.

RFB acronym	RFB fact sheets and map viewer	Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) / Statlant questionnaires	Stocks & Fisheries - FIRMS Partnership	Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems database	Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks	FACP & NASOs	Global Record of Fishing Vessels	Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels (CLAV)	Atlas of Tuna and Billfish Catches	Global Tuna Nominal Catches
ACAP	X									
ACFR	X									
APFIC	X									
BOBP-IGO	X									
CACFISH	X									
CCAMLR	X	X	X	X	X		X			
CCBSP	X									
CCSBT	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
CECAF	X	X	X							
CIFAA	X					X				
COFREMAR	X									
COMHAFAT-ATLAFCO	X									
COPESCAALC	X									
COREP	X									
CPPS	X									
CRFM	X		X							
CTMFM	X						X			
EIFAAC	X									
FCWC	X									
FFA	X						X			
GFCM	X	X	X	X	X	X				
IATTC	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
ICCAT	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
ICES	X	X	X							
IOTC	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
IPHC	X									
IWC	X	X								
JOINTFISH	X									
LTA	X									
LVFO	X									
MRC	X									
NACA	X	X								
NAFO	X	X	X	X	X					
NAMMCO	X									
NASCO	X	X	X							
NEAFC	X	X	X	X	X					
NPAFC	X									
NPFC	X			X						
OLDEPESCA	X									
OSPESCA	X	X								
PERSGA	X									
PICES	X									
PSC	X									
RECOFI	X		X		X					
SEAFDEC	X	X	X			X				
SEAFO	X	X	X	X	X					
SIOFA	X									
SPC	X	X				X			X	
SPRFMO	X			X			X			
SRFC	X									
SWIOFC	X		X							
WCPFC	X	X			X		X	X	X	X
WECAFC	X		X							