



**CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL  
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE COMMISSION**

**Seventh Session**

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

## INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this document is to report on the administrative and financial affairs of the Commission since the last session held in Izmir, Turkey in October 2018. Covered issues include, but are not limited to, the following: CACFish activities undertaken during the inter-sessional period, publications, FAO projects on fisheries and aquaculture in the CACFish countries, the status of membership in CACFish, the status of payment of the membership contributions to the autonomous budget, and review of the expenditures made in the 2018-2021 inter-sessional period.

2. The CACFish Secretariat seeks to achieve its mandated tasks through technical, communications, and operational activities under the supervision of the Commission and FAO. Secretary's primary duties and responsibilities are outlined in the Rules of Procedure<sup>1</sup> of the Commission. The main tasks of the CACFish Secretariat include the following: (i) effective and efficient operations of the Commission; (ii) preparation and submission of estimated annual budgets; (ii) regular monitoring and reporting of CACFish autonomous budget; (iii) running of the 5-year Work Programme of the Commission with technical supervision of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the overall supervision of the Commission; and (iv) reporting to the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN), a collaborative institutional set-up for which FAO provides secretariat services.

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3. During the inter-sessional period, the Commission continued to be supported by the Regional Office (REU) with a Secretariat based in the FAO Sub-regional Office (FAOSEC) located in Ankara, Turkey. In January 2020 Haydar Fersoy, Senior Fishery and Aquaculture Officer of FAO, replaced Victoria Chomo as CACFish Secretary after her assignment to FAO Headquarters in 2019. Alongside the Secretary, the following persons, who had temporary contracts with FAOSEC, provided support of varying duration to the work of the Secretariat: Ramazan Celebi, Atilla Ozdemir, Ferrahi Saracoglu, Hazal Ozdemir, Mariia Uzengin, Disa Vurdem and Bagdat Zhora.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/am913e/am913e.pdf>

### Events organized during the inter-sessional period

4. During the inter-sessional period the following events were organized:
  - a) Fish Genetics Resources – Practical Training on Molecular Methods (19–22 March 2019; Trabzon, Turkey)
  - b) Regional Workshop – Provision of Technical Advice on Restocking and Culture Based Fisheries (11–13 June 2019; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan)
  - c) Regional Workshop – Post-harvest market measures, rules, and standards for ensuring safety and the quality of fish and fish products in Central Asian and Caucasus countries (11 – 13 November 2019; Istanbul, Turkey)
  - d) Fifth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of CACFish (Virtual Meeting, 23 – 24 November 2020).
5. The regional workshop on inland stock assessment in selected large water bodies, scheduled for April 2020, has not been organized due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. In line with the earlier decision of the Commission, invitations were extended to non-ember countries to attend inter-sessional period events of the Commission. This seems to be a useful way to enhance technical regional cooperation, particularly in strengthening technical capacity and in the dissemination of the outcomes of the CACFish activities and to get sufficient number of attendances at the CACFish events.

### External meetings in which the Commission was represented

During the inter-sessional period, the Commission was represented by the Secretary at the following international virtual events (i) 34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 34) (Virtual Session; 1–5 February 2021); (ii) Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (Virtual Meeting, 24–25 February 2021); and (iii) Meeting on the Port State Measures Agreement to Reinforce the Global Fight Against Illegal Fishing (Virtual Meeting, 31 May–4 June 2021).

### Related activities

7. In the inter-sessional period the CACFish Secretariat, supported by FAO technical and administrative officers, consultants, governments and institutions in the CACFish Members, contributed significantly to the implementation of ongoing FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects and Trust Fund projects. An overview of the projects can be found in the Annex Table IV.

### Publications

8. During the inter-sessional period, the Secretariat produced the following CACFish reports:
  - a) Report of the Sixth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission, Izmir, Turkey, 15–18 October 2018. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1251. Ankara, FAO. 2019.  
Available at: <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA3216EN>  
<http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA3216RU>
  - b) Field guide to the control of warmwater fish diseases in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No.1182. Ankara, FAO. 2019.  
Available at: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca4730en/>  
<http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA4730RU>
  - c) Technical Manual on Broodstock Management of Common Carp and Chinese Herbivorous Fish. Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No.1188. Ankara. FAO. 2020.

Available at: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca5827en/>  
<http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA5827RU>

- d) Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission. Virtual Meeting, 23-24 November 2020. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1334. Ankara, FAO. 2021.

Available at: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/fr/c/cb3258b/>

### **Status of acceptance of Agreement**

9. CACFish Membership status remained unchanged since the Sixth Session of Commission (2018). The Commission has five Members as summarized below:

1. Armenia                    3 December 2010
2. Azerbaijan                8 March 2013 (Accepted for deposit on 22 March 2014)
3. Kyrgyzstan                3 May 2010
4. Tajikistan                 9 March 2010
5. Turkey                     19 December 2011

10. The Secretariat encourages the all current cooperating non-contracting parties to become Members by submitting their letters of accession to the Director-General of the Organization. The Secretariat is available to provide background information and estimated budget contributions to countries considering membership.

### **Recommendations adopted under Article V of the CACFish**

11. The Commission adopted, since its Inaugural Session held in 2011, a considerable number of recommendations, submitted to it by TAC. Listed below are all adopted recommendations of the Commission:

- a) Guidelines for Sturgeon Hatchery Practices and Hatchery Management for Release (2011),
- b) Feasibility of Restocking and Culture-based Fisheries in Central Asia (2011),
- c) Better Management Practices for Carp Production in Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (2011),
- d) Recommendations on Fishery and Aquaculture Statistics and Information (2011),
- e) Environmental impact assessment in aquaculture (2013),
- f) Regional principles for responsible aquaculture in Central Asia (2013),
- g) Responsible introductions and transfers of fish in Central Asia and the Caucasus (2013),
- h) Improvement of collection, analysis, and dissemination of fisheries data and information (2013),
- i) Inland fisheries stock assessment (2014),
- j) Regional strategic principles for climate change (2014),
- k) Fish breeding and broodstock management (2014),
- l) FAO Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) in the Central Asian and Caucasus region (2017),
- m) FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS Guidelines) (2017),
- n) Restocking and Culture-Based Fisheries (2021).

12. The scientific recommendations referred to in above paragraph were viewed by the Commission as successful instruments directly contributing to its ultimate set of management, conservation and development objectives. The issues that were brought up in the recommendations were generally relevant to priority areas set by the Technical Advisory Committee and the 5-year Work Programme of the Commission. On the other hand, it should be noted that the Commission has not adopted any recommendations in pursuant to the Article V (Recommendations on development and management measures) of the CACFish Agreement<sup>2</sup>. They are therefore not legally binding. However, the Members are expected to adhere to the adopted recommendations by gradually integrating them into national practices.

## FINANCIAL ISSUES

### Monitoring of CACFish budget

13. The first autonomous budget of CACFish became operational in 2012 following its approval at the Inaugural Session (2011). The CACFish membership fee remained same over the period 2012–2020 as the Commission left the annual budget unchanged at USD 180,000. The Secretariat, in collaboration with FAOSEC Field Program Unit (FPU) and the respective divisions of FAO Headquarters, monitors CACFish autonomous budget through an Oracle-based electronic budget system operated by FAO.

### Contribution payments and arrears

14. Total membership contributions received for 2021 added up to USD 132,204 accounting for 73.45 percent of the total 2021 budget, a higher payment rate compared to 67 percent in 2020. During the inter-sessional period no payment was made for any arrears.

15. The total arrears amounted to USD 371,304 as at 30 August 2021, as seen in the Annex Table I. The earlier arrears therefore remain unchanged at the time of writing of this report. The status of Member's contribution payments per Member is as follows:

- i. Members that paid in full (i.e. Turkey and Azerbaijan);
- ii. Members with partial arrears (i.e. Kyrgyzstan); and
- iii. Members without any contribution payment since the first financial year of the Commission (i.e. Armenia and Tajikistan).

16. Financial regulation V (article 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”.

17. Under Article IX (article 7) of the CACFish Agreement, a Member 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. As of 20 June 2016, Armenia, and Tajikistan fell under the provisions of this Article. It should be noted here that the Agreement may allow the Commission to permit such a Party to vote if the Member could show that conditions beyond its control contributed to this inability to pay. But the Commission in no case may extend the right to vote beyond a further two calendar years.

18. Timely payment of membership contributions is of high importance for the proper implementation of the scheduled activities of the Commission as the arrears bring technical and operational difficulties for the Commission. The CACFish Secretariat sent payment reminder letters in June 2021 to the Members in arrears with their annual contributions.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/al945e/al945e.pdf>

*Extra-budgetary contributions*

19. Turkey made a voluntary extra-budgetary contribution of USD 100,000 in 2016 under the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme budget. No other voluntary extra-budgetary contributions were received in the inter-sessional period.

*Expenditures*

20. The Commission had expenditures in the order of USD 221,400 in 2019. This included USD 67,794 (31 percent) on consultancies in support of the technical work of the Secretariat, USD 48,079 (22 percent) travel costs of delegates, experts and Secretariat staff to participate at regional workshops and other activities, USD 77,684 (36 percent) for contracts, including Letters of Agreement (LoA), USD 7,426 (3 percent) for general operating expenses, USD 2,701 (1.22 percent) for procurement operations, and USD 5,383 (2 percent) in training costs related to the organization of the said meetings. FAO charged 5.9% support cost, which added up to USD 12,335 (6 percent) in 2019.

21. The Commission's expenses in 2020 and 2021 (up to 31 August) have been very low due to COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, total USD 44,331 was spent, mainly on consultancies in support of the technical work of the Secretariat. The consultancies expenses added up to a cost of USD 40,709.

22. As of 15 August 2021, the total balance available in the CACFish Trust Fund (MTF/SEC/005/MUL) was USD 474,120. Since the establishment of the CACFish Trust Fund (autonomous budget) in 2012 the total expenses added up to USD 866,401. Financial highlights (i.e. incomes, breakdown of the expenditures and balances) for the period 2015-2016 are presented in Annex Table II.

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION**

23. In view of the above, the Commission is invited to: (i) note this report and provide further general guidance; (ii) consider the status of the budget when discussing the Work Programme activities for the upcoming years, and (iii) urge the Members in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to close their arrears.

**Annex Table I:**  
Expenditures breakdown for the 2019-2021 (as of 12 August 2021)

	2019	2020	2021
<b>Income</b>			
Budget	180,000	180,000	180,000
<b>Member contribution-received</b>	137,855.33	120,668	132,204
<b>External contribution</b>	-	-	-
<i>Total income</i>	137,855.33	120,668	132,204
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Salaries General Service	0	0	0
Consultants ), including temporary Secretariat staff	67,794	40,709	0
Contracts	77,682	29	0
Locally Contracted Labour	0	0	0
Travel	48,079	666	0
Training	5,383	529	0
Expendable procurement	1,517	0	0
Non-expendable procurement	1,184	0	0
General operating expenses	7,426	14	0
FAO Support cost (5.9 %)	12,335	2,470	0
<i>Total expenditure</i>	221,400	44,331	0
<b>BALANCE</b>	147,621	20,581*	205,134**

\*Contributions received in 2020 were incorporated into the budget in May 2021.

\*\*Contributions received in 2021, as of August 2021, USD 132,204.00 will be incorporated and reflected in balance.

**Annex Table II:  
Status of member contributions as of 12 August 2021 (all figures are in USD)**

<i>Members</i>	<i>Outstanding 31/12/2020</i>	<i>Contribution due for 2021</i>	<i>Received up to 08/08/2021</i>	<i>Outstanding 08/12/2021</i>
<b>Armenia</b>	168,532	31,498	-	200,030
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	5,760	23,734	29,494	0
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	69,739	13,711	-	83,450
<b>Tajikistan</b>	79,477	8,347	-	87,824
<b>Turkey</b>	0	102,710	102,710	0
<b>Totals</b>	323,508	180,000	132,204	371,304

Annex Table III:

## Completed and ongoing FAO projects for fisheries and aquaculture development in CACFish competence area

Project Name	Project Code	Country or region	Main activities	Period	Status	Implementing agency	Budget (USD)
Towards Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries Development in the Kyrgyz Republic	GCP/KYR/012/FIN	Kyrgyzstan	Sustainable aquaculture management, capacity development	2014-2021	Completed	FAO	2,576,639
Improved Technical Capacity of Fish Farmers and Authorities on Fish Feed Development in Central Asia	TCP/SEC/3701	Azerbaijan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Uzbekistan	Capacity building for small-scale fish farmers in efficient feeding	2019-2021	Completed	FAO	186,000
Support of Warm-water Fishery Sector	TCP/TAJ/3805/C4	Tajikistan	Exploitation and utilization of fisheries; fish stock protection; aquaculture; integrated fishery projects	2021-2022	Ongoing	FAO	95,000
Capacity Building for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management in Central Asia, Turkey and Azerbaijan	GCP/SEC/013/TUR	Azerbaijan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Turkey Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	Capacity building for aquaculture management	2019-2022	Ongoing	FAO	1,000,000
Fisheries and Aquaculture Sectoral Preparedness and Response to COVID-19	TCP/TUR/3801/C1	Turkey	Capacity development for adaption and respond to the COVID-19 situation	2021-2022	Ongoing	FAO	98,000
Technical Support for the Modernization of State Fishery Production facility	Concept Note is under Preparation	Azerbaijan	Capacity Building for Fishery Production	2021-2022	Pipeline	FAO	40,000



South-South Cooperation for Freshwater Aquaculture Value Chain Development and Food Security in Western Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia	GCP /RER (658460)	Albania, Armenia, Macedonia Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	Capacity building for aquaculture value chains, markets and trade	2019-2023	Active Pipeline	FAO	1,500,000
Ecosystem Based Management for the Black Sea - (FishEBM BS)	GEF ID 10558	Turkey, Georgia, Ukraine	Capacity development for managing commercial fisheries	2021-2024	Ongoing	FAO/GFCM	2,000,000
Blue Hope Initiative in the Mediterranean Sea	TCP/INT/3702 (17/XI/INT/244)	Algeria Tunisia Turkey	Institutional development and capacity building for agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Sustainable management of natural sources	2018-2021	Ongoing	FAO	495,000
Scientific and Institutional Cooperation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean (EastMed)	GCP/INT/041/ITA	Cyprus Egypt Lebanon Syrian Arab Republic Turkey	Contribute to the sustainable management of marine fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean, Capacity building on fisheries management	2009-2020	Completed	FAO	1,174,831