

### Informal Consultation for Europe and Central Asia 12-15 July 2021 Budapest, Hungary

**Background Note Closing Session** 

#### Regional Technical Commissions' Contribution to the Regional Priorities

#### I. Introduction

1. The priorities of FAO's work, as agreed by the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in the Europe and Central Asia region, covers agriculture, fisheries and forestry. In detail, the ERC, at its Thirty-second Session in 2020,¹ acknowledged the importance of the proposed priorities and the corresponding Regional Initiatives for the region:

#### **Regional Priorities:**

- Formulating effective policies, promoting digital innovation and facilitating rural livelihoods, with emphasis on smallholders, women and youth;
- Food system transformation and support in exploring new markets through the alignment of trade, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary policies to meet World Trade Organization commitments and promote value chain development;
- Promoting sustainable natural resource management and facilitating resilience in agriculture, forestry and other land-use sectors, including mitigating and adapting to climate change; and
- Addressing food insecurity and reducing all forms of malnutrition.

#### Regional Initiatives:<sup>2</sup>

- RI-1 on "Empowering smallholders and family farms and youth, facilitating rural livelihoods and poverty reduction";
- RI-2 on "Transforming food systems and facilitating market access and integration"; and
- RI-3 on "Managing natural resources sustainably and preserving biodiversity in a changing climate."
- 2. Food and nutrition security, gender mainstreaming, governance and climate change are important crosscutting issues. The three Regional Initiatives provide an integrated, programmatic approach to addressing the region's priority issues and guide the implementation of country programmes. FAO also will apply four cross-cutting/cross-sectional "accelerators" as defined in the new Strategic Framework technology, innovation, data and complements (governance, human capital and institutions) in all its programmatic interventions to accelerate impacts while minimizing trade-offs.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> **FAO.** 2020. *Results and Priorities for FAO in the Region*. ERC/20/5. Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 5–7 May 2020. (also available at http://www.fao.org/3/nc229en/nc229en.pdf).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> More information on the FAO Regional Initiatives is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/europe/regional-initiatives/en/">http://www.fao.org/europe/regional-initiatives/en/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> More information on FAO cross-cutting themes is available on p. 21 of the Reviewed Strategic Framework, available at http://www.fao.org/3/ne577en/ne577en.pdf.



3. Currently, there are six FAO technical commissions in the Europe and Central Asia region with focus on technical issues, established under Articles VI and XIV of the FAO Constitution.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Article VI:**

- the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)
- the European Forestry Commission (EFC)
- the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)

#### **Article XIV:**

- the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
- the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)
- the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)
- 4. Although there are significant institutional and operational diversities across these bodies, currently all Article VI bodies ECA<sup>5</sup>, EFC and EIFAAC<sup>6</sup> are reporting to the Regional Conference for Europe and in this context are further integrated into the work at the regional level. The CACFish<sup>7</sup> also decided to report to the ERC, and the GFCM reports to the ERC with an information item. The only commission so far not reporting to the ERC is the EuFMD.
- 5. The main purpose of this document is to provide information to the participants of the informal consultation how the different commissions contribute to the Regional Programme. This document consists of three sections:
  - 1. Section I provides general background information on Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives and the technical commissions in the Europe and Central Asia region.
  - 2. Section II briefly outlines the main priorities of the commissions, their linkage to the Strategic Framework, and the contributions of the commissions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>8</sup> in the region.
  - 3. Section III provides draft conclusions and follow-up recommendations.

#### II. Outline of the main priorities of the technical commissions in the region

Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)<sup>9</sup>

1. Main priorities of work of CACFish for 2021–25 (in general)

At its fifth meeting, held virtually on 23–24 November 2020, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of CACFish agreed on its work plan for the 2021–2022 intersessional period, which focuses on the following priorities:

- inland stock assessment in selected large water bodies;
- ecosystem-based planning and management of fishery and aquaculture resources;
- identification of fish genetic resources from Central Asia and the Caucasus;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The FAO basic texts, including the Constitution, are available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp046e.pdf">http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp046e.pdf</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Since the Twenty-second Session of the ERC in 2000 (for the ECA).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Since the Thirtieth Session of the ERC in 2016 (for the EFC and EIFAAC).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Since its Fifth Session on 10–12 October 2016.

<sup>8</sup> The FAO website on the Sustainable Development Goals is available at http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/en/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish) website is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cacfish/en">http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cacfish/en</a>.



- bioeconomic and management approaches to culture-based fisheries development;
- gender in fisheries;
- artificial propagation of sturgeon; and
- relevant trainings for researchers, technical ministerial staff, hatchery managers and representatives of fishers' organizations.

#### 2. Linkage between the Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives and the priorities of CACFish

The Seventh Session of CACFish, originally scheduled for 2020, has not been organized due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The above-mentioned work programme of TAC for the 2021–2022 intersessional period will be subject to review and approval of the Commission at the Session scheduled for 2021. The work programme activities of TAC for the 2021–2022 intersessional period are related to achievements under all the three Regional Initiatives (RI-1, RI-2 and RI-3).

## 3. CACFish contribution of to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

Inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture contribute to SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 13, SDG 14 and SDG 17 (Annex III).

#### **European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)** 10

#### 1. Main priorities of the work of ECA for 2021–25 (in general)

The main purpose of the ECA is to assist member governments in undertaking joint action and cooperating in agricultural problems, including research, education, extension, and review of nutrition matters and issues related to agricultural economy not under the purview of the Committee on Commodity Problems. To this end, the Commission aims to encourage and facilitate cooperation among international, governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with agriculture in the region 11 and to make recommendations on all matters within its geographical and technical competence.

# 2. Linkage between the ECA recommendations and Regional Priorities and Regional Initiatives Regional Initiative 1 (RI-1)

The Commission fully recognized the importance of national systems for the protection of plants against pests to exploit fully the existing potential of plant production to help reduce poverty and ensure food security and economic development across the region.

#### **Regional Initiative 2 (RI-2)**

The Commission expressed its support for the International Year of Plant Health, aiming at raising awareness on the importance of plant health for societies and national economies. Additionally, in order to develop trade and tourism but avoid the unacceptable risks of pest movements, the Commission recommended that awareness-raising activities be carried out to inform about existing and emerging pest risks coming from human mobility.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) website is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/eca/en/">http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/eca/en/</a>.

<sup>11</sup> The FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies website is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsb-subject-matter/statutory-bodies-details/en/c/76/">http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsb-subject-matter/statutory-bodies-details/en/c/76/</a>.



#### **Regional Initiative 3 (RI-3)**

The Commission expressed its support for national and international research programmes aiming at gathering more information on the impacts of climate change on issues related to plant health.

## 3. ECA contribution to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

The ECA contributes to **SDG 2** (targets 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), **SDG 5** (targets 5.a.1 and 5.a.2), **SDG 13** (target 13.1) and **SDG 17** (target 17.11).

#### European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)

#### 1. Main priorities of work of the EuFMD for 2021–25 (in general)

The EuFMD work programme for the period 2021–2023 was endorsed at the Forty-fourth EuFMD General Session held in April 2021, in line with the Hold-FAST strategy approved in 2019 and aimed at promoting national and international actions to improve preparedness and control measures against foot-and-mouth diseases with the extension of preparedness and risk reduction actions to similar transboundary animal diseases (TADs), according to the threat posed to Europe.

#### The three strategic goals/pillars for 2019-2023:

- 1. improved preparedness for the management of FMD and similar TAD ("FAST disease") crises by members (n= 39) and across Europe as a whole;
- 2. reduced risk to members from the FAST disease (FMD and similar TADs) situation in the European neighbourhood (n=18 countries in the regions of North Africa, Middle East and South East European Neighbourhood); and
- 3. sustained progress of the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases Global Strategy against FMD and the improved security of the supply of effective vaccines.

#### 2. Linkage between the Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives and the priorities of the EuFMD

By strengthening preparedness for climate-related threats and addressing the change in disease burdens in countries affected or at risk, the programme mainly addresses the adaptation to climate change indicated as a priority in the FAO Regional Conference for Europe 2020. It also contributes to promoting and integrating the One Health approach in prevention, preparedness and control programmes.

## 3. EuFMD contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

The work of the Commission contributes to SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 13 and SDG 17.

#### European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)<sup>12</sup>

#### 1. Main priorities of work of EIFAAC for 2021–25 (in general)

<sup>12</sup> The European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) website is available at http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/eifaac/en.



The current work plan for 2019–2021 is built on three goals revised at the Twenty-ninth Session (2017, Poland) and a new Communication Strategy adopted by the Thirtieth Session held in Dresden, Germany, 11–13 September 2019:<sup>13</sup>

- Goal 1: EIFAAC is a leading pan-European organization providing policy advice in inland fisheries
  and aquaculture, consistent with the objectives and principles of FAO (Strategic Objectives,
  Regional Initiatives, SDGs) and other relevant international instruments.
- Goal 2: EIFAAC delivers technical and managerial advice, information and coordination on matters related to inland fisheries and aquaculture to its members and serves as an international network of organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations.
- Goal 3: EIFAAC, via its structures, processes and procedures, implements the efficient delivery of its organizations and members' objectives in accordance with FAO principles and best international practices.

#### 2. Linkage between the Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives and the priorities of EIFAAC

The EIFAAC priorities on sustainable management of European inland fisheries (small-scale fishers and recreational fishing) and freshwater aquaculture, in line with the adaptation of the sector to climate change, are linked to RI-3 (SP2) on "supporting countries in sustainable natural resource management, combating land degradation and desertification, including mitigation and adaptation to climate change and sustainable, climate-resilient natural resource management." EIFAAC activities also contribute to RI-1 (SP1, SP2) on supporting smallholder fishers and fish farmers in Europe for livelihood diversity and rural development, using Europe's freshwater resources in rivers and lakes to support riparian communities through projects on protecting fish habitats (eels working group, invasive species research) and research on the impact of cormorants on fish farm productivity and fish welfare, as well as conflict identification (given the multiple users of freshwater resources).

EIFAAC priorities and regional project activities contribute directly to FAO's four strategic goals: "Better Production," "Better Environment," "Better Nutrition" and "Better Life."

## 3. EIFAAC contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

The fisheries sector is best reflected under SDG 14. FAO is custodian of five target indicators under this SDG (targets 14.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b and 14.c). However, the mandate of EIFAAC is limited to freshwater resources, while SDG 14 focuses on seas and oceans (Annex III).

#### **European Forestry Commission (EFC)** 14

#### 1. Main priorities of work of the EFC for 2021–25 (in general)

The purpose of the EFC is to provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis; to exchange information and, generally through special subsidiary bodies, advice on suitable practices and action regarding technical and economic problems; and to make appropriate recommendations in relation to the foregoing. The EFC has one subsidiary body, namely the Working Party

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> **FAO.** 2019. Report of the Thirtieth Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission. Dresden, Germany, 11–13 September 2019. (also available at http://www.fao.org/3/ca7495en/ca7495en.pdf).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The European Forestry Commission (EFC) website is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/en/">http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/en/</a>. The report of the joint session of the Thirty-eighth European Forestry Commission and the Seventy-third UNECE Committee on Forest and the Forest Industry is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/72568/en/">http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/72568/en/</a>.



on the Management of Mountain. The EFC has a regional program of work through the Budapest and Ankara offices that includes following priorities:

- strengthen forest governance (including policy, legal and institutional structures);
- establish and assist with maintenance of the forest/tree resources assessment and monitoring system;
- ensure sustainable wood mobilization and the use of non-wood forest resources, in light of the increased demand for bioenergy;
- strengthen country capacities to deal with increasing threats posed by forest invasive and native
  pests and disease spread and outbreaks in expanded international trade and travel, coupled with
  local climatic change;
- strengthen country capacities to assess and monitor climate change impacts on forests and land resources, and support countries in adapting to climate change and mitigating its impact; and
- combat deforestation and the degradation of forests and restore and sustainably manage mountain watersheds.

#### 2. Linkage between the Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives and the priorities of the EFC

#### **Regional Initiative 1 (RI-1)**

The capacities of the regional institutions and technical networks are strengthened to promote good practices for income generation from non-wood forest products as part of income diversification support to agriculture-dependent communities.

#### **Regional Initiative 2 (RI-2)**

Knowledge products are developed and disseminated, including macro- and microeconomic reviews of agricultural sectors; analysis of market trends, trade policy changes and market access requirements; and agricultural outlook and policy analysis (forest sector outlook studies, Forest Products Annual Market Review and the role of forests in a circular bioeconomy).

#### **Regional Initiative 3 (RI-3)**

The capacities of governments and regional technical networks to improve risk monitoring and early warning systems in the agriculture sector are strengthened through the technical knowledge and guidance provided, in cooperation with CADRI. The capacities of the technical networks in the region are strengthened in the adoption and promotion of nature-based solutions in the agriculture and forestry sectors, supportive of sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate.

# 3. EFC contribution to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

The EFC works to contribute to the implementation of SDG 15 (targets 15.1 and 15.2) and SDG 12 (target 12.2).

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) <sup>16</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> CADRI is the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) website is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/gfcm/en/">http://www.fao.org/gfcm/en/</a>. The report of the Fortieth Session of GFCM, from June 2016, is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/gfcm/reports/statutory-meetings/detail/en/c/423828/">http://www.fao.org/gfcm/reports/statutory-meetings/detail/en/c/423828/</a>.



#### 1. Main priorities of work of the GFCM for 2021–25 (in general)

In 2016, the GFCM adopted its mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries<sup>17</sup> to improve the sustainability of fisheries and ensure the reversal of the alarming trend in the status of commercially exploited stocks. Building on the progress of the mid-term strategy, in 2020 the GFCM initiated a process aimed at adopting a new GFCM strategy (NS) in November 2021. The NS currently holds five targets, which include priorities and actions. The GFCM also adopted a strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture (AS), which envisages a future for aquaculture in which a level playing field is achieved and the promotion of the sector is ensured so that it is more competitive, sustainable, productive, profitable and equitable. It is based on three targets and associated outputs and activities.

#### 2. Linkage between the Regional Priorities, Regional Initiatives, and the GFCM targets

**Regional Priorities 1, 2 and 4 and Regional Initiatives 1 and 2:** Target 4 (NS) aims to support livelihoods by working towards decent employment and engaged fishers towards profitable fisheries. Target 3 (AS) and Target 3 (NS) ensure that aquaculture is a flourishing industry and a market-oriented sector and is integrated into modern supply chains. Among others, Target 3 (NS) seeks to deliver a sustainable and resilient sector growing to its full potential through support for responsible investments and capitalization on technology and information systems.

Regional Priority 3 and Regional Initiative 3: Target 1 (NS) aims to address sustainability, conservation and environment issues in an integrated way. Target 3 (NS) seeks to promote practices supporting sustainability in environment, products and sector and to improve the perception of aquaculture. Target 1 (AS) ensures that aquaculture is regulated by a sound and functioning system and by the implementation of specific regulations governing the sector. Target 2 (AS) ensures that aquaculture is integrated into the environment, is able to secure health and welfare to farmed aquatic animals and is supported by cooperative research and technological development. Target 2 (NS) focuses on compliance and enforcement and should be instrumental in swiftly ending illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Target 5 (NS) focuses on capacity development through technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and efficient partnerships in a subregional perspective.

## 3. GFCM contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 14 is of relevance to the management of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture and sets forth targets that advocate for healthy and resilient marine ecosystems, offering substantial guidance as to how challenges to sustainability should be tackled. Other SDGs (2, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15 and 17) also are highly relevant in this context. The targets of the new GFCM strategy and the aquaculture strategy address the targets of the SDG 14 as follows:

New GFCM strategy targets	Aquaculture strategy targets	SDG 14 targets
Target 1		Target 14.1
Target 1	-	Target 14.2
Targets 1, 2		Target 14.4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> **FAO.** 2016. Resolution GFCM/40/2016/2 for a mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries. 20 pp. (also available at <a href="http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/mul166888.pdf">http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/mul166888.pdf</a>).



Target 1		Target 14.5
Targets 1, 3, 4, 5	Targets 1, 2, 3	Targets 14.7, a, b, c

#### III. Conclusions

The regional technical commissions are increasingly connected to the Regional Priorities and Regional Initiatives, not at the least through most of them reporting to the Regional Conference. This document demonstrates the important complementary contribution of the regional technical commissions in specific, in-depth technical analysis and discussions, as well as the key policy recommendations provided by the commissions to Members in the region.

Taking into consideration the universality, interconnectedness and indivisibility of the Sustainable Development Goals, the new FAO Strategic Framework for 2022–31 and the programme priority areas, it is recommended that the technical commissions further integrate the guidance of this document and define their roles in supporting accelerators and cross-cutting issues.

With the new generation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and the Country Programming Frameworks, the recommendations of the commissions should be further integrated at country level by the respective line ministries.

As some of the Member Countries in the region are not members of the technical commissions, they are encouraged to consider joining the relevant commissions as they consider appropriate.

The issue of the EuFMD reporting to the Regional Conference for Europe is still pending. A decision should be taken that would allow for the further strengthening of synergy and dialogue among key stakeholders, in line with the priorities of the commissions and the region.



#### Annex I

### Membership status of the region's countries in the technical commissions

Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)		
Armenia	Tajikistan	
Azerbaijan	Turkey	
Kyrgyzstan		

European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)		
Albania	Latvia	
Andorra	Lithuania	
Armenia	Luxembourg	
Austria	Malta	
Azerbaijan	Monaco	
Belarus	Montenegro	
Belgium	Netherlands	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	North Macedonia	
Bulgaria	Norway	
Croatia	Poland	
Cyprus	Portugal	
Czechia	Republic of Moldova	
Denmark	Romania	
Estonia	Russian Federation	
European Union (Member Organization)	San Marino	
Faroe Islands	Serbia	
Finland	Slovakia	
France	Slovenia	
Georgia	Spain	
Germany	Sweden	
Greece	Switzerland	
Hungary	Tajikistan	
Iceland	Turkey	
Ireland	Turkmenistan	
Israel	Ukraine	
Italy	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	
Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	
Kyrgyzstan		

European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)	
Albania	Latvia
Austria	Lithuania
Belgium	Luxembourg
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Malta
Bulgaria	Montenegro
Croatia	Netherlands
Cyprus	North Macedonia
Czechia	Norway



Denmark	Poland
Estonia	Portugal
Finland	Romania
France	Serbia
Georgia	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Sweden
Iceland	Switzerland
Ireland	Turkey
Israel	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Italy	

European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)		
Albania	Israel	
Austria	Italy	
Belgium	Latvia	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Lithuania	
Bulgaria	Luxembourg	
Croatia	Netherlands	
Cyprus	Norway	
Czechia	Poland	
Denmark	Portugal	
Estonia	Romania	
European Union (Member Organization)	Slovakia	
Finland	Spain	
France	Sweden	
Germany	Switzerland	
Greece	Turkey	
Hungary	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	
Iceland		
Ireland		

European Forestry Commission (EFC)	
Albania	Latvia
Austria	Lithuania
Belarus	Luxembourg
Belgium	Malta
Bulgaria	Netherlands
Croatia	North Macedonia
Cyprus	Norway
Czechia	Poland
Denmark	Portugal
Estonia	Romania
European Union (Member Organization)	Russian Federation
Finland	Slovakia
France	Slovenia
Germany	Spain
Greece	Sweden





Hungary	Switzerland
Iceland	Turkey
Ireland	Ukraine
Israel	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Italy	Uzbekistan

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)	
Albania	Lebanon
Algeria	Libya
Bulgaria	Malta
Croatia	Monaco
Cyprus	Montenegro
Egypt	Morocco
European Union (Member Organization)	Romania
France	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Israel	Syrian Arab Republic
Japan	Tunisia
Italy	Turkey

**Annex II** 

#### Inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture's contribution to SDGs<sup>18</sup>

- SDG 1 and SDG 2 (No Poverty and Zero Hunger): Solutions to the management issues sought by CACFish contribute to addressing the problem of low fish consumption in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Global fish consumption per capita in 2018 reached 20.5 kg per year, whereas in Central Asia and the Caucasus, the human consumption of fish per capita is below 5 kg per year, the lowest in the world. This has implications for obesity and heart disease of populations dependent on meat for protein instead of on healthier fish products (CACFish). Solutions to the management issues sought by EIFAAC will contribute to addressing the problem of low fish consumption in the countries of the Europe and Central Asia region through a new project on socioeconomic valuation of inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture of Europe (2021–2023). In particular, the contribution of recreational fisheries to food security through the consumption of caught fish is a common practice in Eastern, Southern and Central European countries. However, this contribution to protein of households is not recorded (EIFAAC).
- **SDG 5** (Gender Equality): The regional capacity-building activities funded by CACFish and EIFAAC encourage participation by women and youth.
- **SDG 8** (Decent Work and Economic Growth): CACFish and EIFAAC activities are linked to the sustainable management of water resources in Central Asia, which contributes to rural livelihoods, as most fish farmers in the area are smallholders and small-scale fishers in rivers and lakes. Protecting biodiversity and natural resources for future generations also contributes to future employment, when fish stocks are sustainable. FAO estimates that inland fisheries are an important source of direct employment and income to an estimated 16.8–20.7 million people globally.
- SDG 6, SDG 13, SDG 14 (Clean Water and Sanitation; Climate Action; Life below Water): By contributing to the development and sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture, the work of CACFish and EIFAAC contributes to addressing the issues of climate change, as aquaculture is more environmentally friendly when compared to other forms of meat production. Fuel consumption for inland fisheries in lakes and rivers is typically lower than fuel consumption from commercial marine fisheries. Thus, improving the use of local water resources for fish production is more environmentally friendly than importing ocean fish from stocks that may be overfished or sourced illegally. FAO reports that 33.1 percent of global fish stocks are overutilized. A new EIFAAC project focuses on conflict identification of inland fisheries and aquaculture with other freshwater users. Given the impacts of climate change on water availability, conflicts will increase, and solutions need to be investigated for sharing resources sustainably.
- **SDG 17** (Partnerships for the Goals): CACFish and EIFAAC directly contributes to this SDG because it promotes shared research, capacity-building activities and improved collaboration among the five member governments and their national research institutions. South-South cooperation is promoted through this regional commission.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> **FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO.** 2018. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018. Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition. Rome, FAO. (also available at http://www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf).