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## COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

### Thirtieth Session

Rome, Italy, 9- 13 July 2012

### Fisheries and Aquaculture Priorities in the Programme of Work and Medium Term Plan

#### Executive Summary

This document is presented to inform the Committee about: i) developments in the implementation of the Organization's programme of work relating to the sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources, and ii) the main recommendations of the FAO Regional Conferences relevant to fisheries and aquaculture.

This document is submitted to COFI within the context of two other papers which relate to i) the challenges for the future of fisheries and aquaculture, and FAO's potential role in addressing those challenges (document COFI 2012/12/11 - Vision for the future), and ii) the Organization's current approach to reviewing its future strategic direction (document COFI 2012/12/12.1 - Outline of the Reviewed Strategic Framework).

#### The Committee is invited to:

The Committee is invited to take the information presented in this document into account in advising on alignment of FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture within the context of the Vision for the Future and the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

## Introduction

1. At its 29th session, 31 January – 4 February 2011, COFI expressed its support for the Organization-wide reforms and agreed with the priorities set for fisheries and aquaculture, including areas of emphasis and de-emphasis. In particular, the Committee agreed that activities of a continuing nature linked to FAO's principle responsibilities and core functions should primarily be funded by Regular Programme funds.
2. The Committee agreed that FAO, through its Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI), and in particular the Assistant Director-General for Fisheries and Aquaculture, should play a proactive advocacy role in fisheries and aquaculture issues, within their respective mandates, through regular high-level, direct contacts with Members and stakeholders, especially with regard to promoting the implementation of the Code and its related instruments, and proposing priority areas of work.
3. The FAO Conference at its 37th Session, 25 June- 2 July 2011, endorsed the priorities in the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2010-2013 and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2012-2013, including those for sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources (SO-C) as shown in Annex A.
4. Concurrently, the Organization has pursued its strategy to secure extra-budgetary resources by finalizing the negotiations of the FAO-led and GEF-supported programme for the sustainable management of marine resources in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), the EU-funded Smartfish project, the EAF-Nansen project funded by Norway, the NEPAD/FAO partnership programme (NFPP) funded by SIDA, and by implementing on-going projects. Aquaculture has been identified as a corporate Impact Focus Area to mobilize extra-budgetary resources and strengthen further FAO aquaculture work.
5. The review of the FAO Strategic Framework and the preparation of a Medium Term Plan (MTP) are foreseen every four years under the approach to planning introduced by the Conference in 2009. The review of the current Strategic Framework 2010-19 and preparation of the next MTP for 2014-17 is being driven by the Strategic Thinking Process launched in January 2012 by the Director-General to determine the future strategic direction of FAO. Details on the outputs thus far and future direction of the Strategic Thinking Process are described in Document COFI/2012/12.1.
6. FAO, through the FI department has developed two future vision papers on capture fisheries and aquaculture respectively, and the consolidated findings of these papers are presented to COFI in the document entitled Vision for the future (COFI 2012/11). In addition, staff from across the Organization, including from the FI department continue to participate actively in the Strategic Thinking Process for further elaboration of the five Strategic Objectives for the future work of the Organization set out in the document entitled Outline of the Reviewed Strategic Framework (COFI 2012/12.1). In addition, action plans for implementation of these Objectives are being developed, including with a view to streamlining fisheries and aquaculture issues in these five SOs and developing synergies across sectors and departments, including with the decentralized offices.
7. In the first milestone of formal dialogue with the governing bodies, the Regional Conferences, held during March-May 2012, considered global trends identified by the Process as drivers of change, and provided guidance on regional priorities and regional specificities of the main challenges representing possible priority areas of future work of the Organization.
8. In addition, a number of evaluations of FAO activities relevant to fisheries and aquaculture have been undertaken and finalized during 2011 and part of 2012, in particular the Evaluation of the FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries which will be considered along with a Management Response by the Programme Committee at its 112th Session in November 2012. Other relevant, recent evaluations include the Evaluation of FAO's role on work in food and agriculture policy; Evaluation of the FAO's role and work in nutrition; and Evaluation of the ongoing Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for Asia (RFLP/RAS/237/SPA) funded by Spain.

9. As a result, an FI departmental Strategic Planning Task Force is reviewing FAO's ongoing work in Fisheries and Aquaculture to take into account relevant recommendations of the above-mentioned evaluations, while focussing further on key substantive areas and activities of work, in particular those that will enable FAO to strengthen its work on fisheries governance, aquaculture and post-harvest activities as well as support to decentralized offices (DOs), and have high impact at national and regional levels as well as contribute proactively in support of the preparation of the MTP 2014-17.

### **Implementation of the Programme of Work 2012-13**

10. The 2012-13 prioritization process of work under Strategic Objective C, Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture, was further consolidated and streamlined to adapt to the new developments and challenges facing the organization. Focus was on delivery of the areas identified for emphasis by the 29th session of COFI and confirmed by the 37th Conference of FAO (Annex A), within the context of strengthening support to FAO field programme and Decentralized Offices. Further adaptation efforts were made to free staff time to be devoted to the consultative process leading to the negotiation and finalization of the ABNJ proposal and the implementation of other FI projects.

11. Regional Focus Groups (RFGs) for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin American and the Caribbean, Near East and North Africa have been established and their functioning strengthened to provide support to regional and sub-regional fishery and aquaculture officers, to establish an institutional forum for exchange of information/discussion and coordination of regional/sub-regional activities, priorities and development issues, to bridge the gap between HQ and decentralized offices/officers, to respond to the introduction of the new organizational governing bodies such as the FAO Regional Conferences, to respond to the increased emphasis on decentralization, and to facilitate fisheries and aquaculture related input to and participation in national programming frameworks and national/sub-regional/regional resource mobilization programmes.

12. FAO is refining the Terms of References of the RFGs and their respective members and working towards the designation of RFG leaders to drive the groups and their work ahead. Regional Focus Groups are not policy decision making bodies. Emphasis is on information exchange, communication, coordination and technical and operational work/issues.

13. The Country Programming Framework (CPF) is a mechanism to support the DOs and national work. The new CPF is expected to be a milestone in the implementation of the FAO decentralization reform and lays the basis for a more integrated and bottom-up approach to the FAO Programming Process. Its translation into effective country programmes is closely linked to the implementation of other components of the FAO reform, including the sub-regional and regional programming modalities, the introduction of results-based management, the structure and functioning of decentralized offices, the Resource Mobilization and Management Strategy and the decentralization of the Technical Cooperation Projects (TCPs). The CPF will increasingly be used as the gateway to FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture in member countries, and on national and local priorities.

14. FAO is leading the GEF-supported programme for the sustainable management of marine resources in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) which aims to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ and to meet related global targets agreed in international fora. The ABNJ Programme is an innovative and comprehensive initiative comprised of four projects which bring together governments, regional management bodies, relevant private sectors and industries and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of working towards ensuring the sustainable use and conservation of the ABNJ biodiversity and ecosystem services. The Programme concentrates on a long-term plan to establish strong networks, best management practices and facilitated information sharing needed to make a transformational impact towards responsible and sustainable use of ABNJ resources.

15. In relation to advocacy, cooperation has been sought with the World Bank, the Prince Charles Charity International Sustainable Unit, OECD and other stakeholders, including the private sector, to develop advocacy partnerships around fisheries and aquaculture sustainability. The intention is to develop a program of high-level seminars for political and industry leaders to increase awareness of the benefits of improved governance, production and management practices in accordance with the CCRF. The first such seminar was held last March in Oslo with the support of the Norwegian Government.

16. Further, the Government of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with FAO and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) successfully held the Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on Aquaculture for Food Security, Nutrition and Economic Development (Colombo, Sri Lanka 28-29 July 2011). In the resulting Colombo Declaration, seventeen participating Ministers and their representatives committed to collectively exerting their political leadership towards strengthening the contribution of aquaculture to food security, nutrition and economic development in Asia, to strengthening regional cooperation in aquaculture development and to making aquaculture development one of the instruments to achieve regional aspirations of social and economic development and to enhance prosperity among nations.

17. FAO, along with 27 international agencies, organizations and conventions, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) to promote the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

18. Currently, FAO is participating in the Yeosu 2012 Expo (12 May-12 August 2012): "Living Ocean and Coasts" in South Korea, as part of the UN Pavilion which depicts the work of 24 UN bodies and international organizations, including FAO, and highlights the key role played by oceans and coasts in the global economy, including human health, biodiversity, sustainable energy and food security. It will culminate with an FAO high-level symposium on "Alleviating Hunger & Poverty: Making a Difference with Fish" (8-9 August 2012) to which Ministers, industry leaders and renowned experts are expected to participate.

### **FAO Regional Conferences in 2012**

19. From 2010 onwards, the FAO Regional Conferences have had a more prominent role in providing guidance on priority concerns and requirements for their regions for consideration by the Programme and Finance Committees, and the Council. Reports of the 2012 Regional Conferences contain information or guidance specifically related to fisheries and aquaculture in the regions and related needs.

20. The Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific requested FAO to assist member countries through programmes and activities related to the sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture resources through an ecosystems approach framework. The Conference recognized that Regional Technical Commissions (RTCs) such as APFIC<sup>1</sup> provide effective mechanisms for addressing specific technical matters and agreed that their recommendations can be considered the regional priorities. These included, inter alia, development of lower cost assessment methods that were not heavily reliant on survey cruises, a clearly defined concept of Small Scale Fisheries not limited to the size of the vessel or gear used, development of a national Ecosystem Approach framework through which EAF/EAA activities can be implemented and reported, development of alternative aquaculture feeds that contain or utilize less wild fish, and the strengthening of capacity for assessments of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia Pacific region for the purpose of policy development and management, reviews of the effects of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture and advice on adaptation and mitigation measures for the sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission

21. Likewise, the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean endorsed the priorities for fisheries and aquaculture adopted by the RTCs including COPESCAALC<sup>2</sup> and WECAFC<sup>3</sup> and supported their programmes for sustainable development and climate change adaptation; that fisheries and aquaculture, including small-scale fisheries and resource-poor aquaculture, as well as micro- and small enterprises, should be considered in a visible manner in the Programme of Work 2013–2014, and the allocation of funds for stock assessment to allow the sustainable management of inland fishery resources. The Conference stated the importance of analysing the concentration of production and inputs, as well as the concentration of marketing, which affected consumers and family farming in particular, including small-scale fisheries and resource-poor aquaculture. The Caribbean Sub-region emphasized in particular the priority of disaster risk management associated with climate change and the need to develop new instruments for managing such risk. In addition it requested that priority should be given to fisheries and aquaculture. The Mesoamerican Sub-region (Central America and Mexico) also requested that priority should be given to fisheries and aquaculture as well as two cross-cutting issues – statistics and investment – and recommended incorporating participatory mechanisms and emphasizing training and inclusive knowledge management.

22. The Regional Conference for Europe supported the adoption of an integrated approach to agricultural development, including forestry and fisheries and cooperation with multilateral and bilateral donors and International Financial Institutions to achieve synergy of support to farmers and rural areas, and further technical work and policy recommendations for reduction of post-harvest waste along the food chain. The Conference appreciated being informed by EIFAAC<sup>4</sup> about FAO activities on fisheries in the region and emphasized the need to prioritize FAO's work on fisheries and aquaculture in the region, both in the area of responsible capture fishery, and in particular in the field of environmentally friendly aquaculture. The Conference urged the sharing of experience among countries in the region and regional fisheries' bodies cooperation on the sustainable management of fisheries resources. In the context of overexploitation of capture fisheries in the region, the Conference stressed the importance of the work of FAO on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, in particular combating IUU fishing. The importance of EAF and of gender aspects in fisheries and aquaculture was emphasized as well as FAO's support to CACFish<sup>5</sup> and GFCM<sup>6</sup>. Problems of concern to RFBs in the region include the introduction of alien species for aquaculture; diseases spread through movements of hatchery produced stocks, new species for aquaculture and development and enhancement of the ornamental fish trade; the impact of illegal fishing for bluefin tuna; concerns about the impact of harvest on small pelagic resources to provide feed for tuna farming; and the risk of environmental deterioration near fish farms as a result of accumulation of uneaten feed fish on the sediment.

23. The Regional Conference for Africa commended FAO for its support in implementation of Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and appreciated that a companion document had been prepared to integrate fisheries, and recommended that these be better integrated in the process of implementation. The Conference urged FAO to continue supporting countries, regional economic communities and the NEPAD<sup>7</sup> Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) in the formulation and implementation of CAADP. The Conference urged FAO to further focus its work based on its comparative advantage, particularly in several key areas that require prioritization in 2012-13 including reduction of post-harvest losses, value addition and processing, building capacity of national food control systems, improved water utilization, development of aquaculture and collection and collation of statistics. The Conference further requested FAO support for policy and budget reviews, institutional strengthening and building innovative financing

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<sup>2</sup> Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean

<sup>3</sup> Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission

<sup>4</sup> European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission

<sup>5</sup> Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission

<sup>6</sup> General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean

<sup>7</sup> New Partnership for Africa's Development

partnerships, and assisting governments in extending and scaling up public-private partnerships beyond the primary production sector into downstream activities such as food processing as well as in the fisheries sector.

24. The Regional Conference for the Near East noted that in relation to climate change there is a need to increase participation and awareness amongst all stakeholders to harmonize monitoring tools, standards and development of vulnerability indicators to improve risk assessments, preparedness and response. It urged member countries to improve financing in, inter alia, the fishery sector by greening the economy, and strengthening community capacities and livelihoods to cope with and adapt to climate change and requested FAO to assist member countries of the region to enhance their technical capacity to deal with and tackle the impacts of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture resources. The Conference emphasized that amongst the main challenges were: water scarcity and its efficiency use, fisheries and aquaculture sustainability, and climate change adaptation and mitigation and requested that these priority areas be included in the Programme of Work and Budget. The Conference took note of the recommendations agreed by regional Commissions including RECOFI<sup>8</sup> and GFCM in their last sessions in 2010-2011, and recognized the important role they play in providing effective mechanisms for addressing specific sub-sectoral technical matters. The Conference highlighted the need of promote further regional cooperation in support of fisheries management and aquaculture development in the region.

### **Guidance sought**

25. In light of the above and taking into consideration document COFI/2012/12.1, the Committee is invited to provide guidance and recommendations on FI approach to reconcile the 2012-2013 prioritization with the Corporate Strategic Thinking Process and on how to further align the ongoing transformational changes into the adjusted PWB 2012-2013 and MTP 2014-2017.

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<sup>8</sup> Regional Commission for Fisheries

## Appendix

### Strategic Objective C - Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources

#### *Overview*

81. Work toward sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources continues to be guided by COFI recommendations. As endorsed by COFI at its last session, high priority is assigned to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in relation to food security and poverty alleviation, and to climate change and its expected impacts, taking into account the results of the Cancun Conference. Areas of emphasis described in document COFI/2011/9 were endorsed by COFI, including: combating IUU fishing; an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAF) and the ecosystem approach to aquaculture (EAA); reconciling goals of biodiversity conservation and development of the sectors; value chain and market approach to implement responsible practices in fisheries and aquaculture utilization and trade.

82. COFI also specifically agreed that the following activities should primarily be met by Regular Programme funds: the provision of global statistics on fisheries and aquaculture; the regular analysis and reporting on global aquaculture development; status and trends in marine and inland fisheries and ecosystems; information on apparent fish consumption and regional and global developments in fish markets and trade; the publication of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA); provision of data and information to support the Compliance Agreement; normative and technical support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; support to Codex Alimentarius related to fish and fishery products; and, interaction with other UN and related agencies. COFI stressed that, as a matter of principle, extra-budgetary funds should be allocated to priority areas as identified in the PWB

83. COFI recommended that FAO continue to keep Members informed about the implications of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture and provide information on possible fishing industry contribution to climate change mitigation (ways to reduce the sectors reliance on, and consumption of fossil fuels). Other areas of relevance highlighted include gender, water, land tenure, biosecurity and emergencies.

#### *Areas of emphasis and de-emphasis*

#### **C01 – Members and other stakeholders have improved formulation of policies and standards that facilitate the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and other international instruments, as well as response to emerging issues**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Adoption of an international instrument on flag State performance.</p> <p>New international instrument (voluntary, in the form of guidelines) on small-scale fisheries drawing on relevant existing instruments, and complementing the Code.</p> <p>Developing a Global Record of Fishing Vessels as one of the useful tools to combat IUU fishing, in a cost-effective manner, taking advantage of existing systems and information technology (IT) platforms, where possible.</p> <p>Capacity development for implementation of existing normative frameworks, and knowledge tools such as statistics, departmental and corporate information systems, and communications.</p>	<p>Work on any other new international instruments.</p> <p>Convening of a global conference on fleet overcapacity, without prejudice to overall work on fishing capacity.</p>

**C02 - Governance of fisheries and aquaculture has improved through the establishment or strengthening of national and regional institutions, including RFBs**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Support to COFI and its two subcommittees (including review in July 2012 of its practices and rules of procedure).</p> <p>Requirements of technical support from FAO RFBs; Secretariat of the Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariats' Network (RSN).</p> <p>Continued support towards the establishment of a new RFB for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.</p>	<p>Establishment of new RFBs (except for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden).</p>

**C03 - More effective management of marine and inland capture fisheries by FAO Members and other stakeholders has contributed to the improved state of fisheries resources, ecosystems and their sustainable use**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAF) in both marine and inland fisheries, including capacity building and support to countries.</p> <p>Improving information on implications of climate change for fishery resources and livelihoods.</p> <p>Improving management of inland fisheries ecosystems and resources, particularly in developing countries.</p>	<p>Governance and management issues related to deep sea fisheries, particularly in areas beyond national jurisdiction, without prejudice to the work supported primarily by extrabudgetary funding.</p>

**C04 - Members and other stakeholders have benefited from increased production of fish and fish products from sustainable expansion and intensification of aquaculture**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Promoting aquaculture in those regions where production is still low in comparison with global averages, including the Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA).</p> <p>Implementation of the provisions of the relevant articles of the CCRF.</p> <p>Promoting an ecosystem-based approach to aquaculture (EAA) and sustainable management practices.</p> <p>Increased productivity (including future prospects) of off-the-coast aquaculture.</p> <p>Biosecurity, responsible biodiversity and efficient feed management.</p>	<p>Regions where aquaculture is well developed (Asia and Western Europe).</p> <p>Aquaculture beyond the national jurisdiction.</p> <p>Publications on remote sensing and GIS studies, organic aquaculture, studies on land and water use in aquaculture, manuals on mud crab culture, bivalves depuration.</p> <p>Drainage, wetlands development and technology and research in irrigation and drainage (while still seeking to satisfy demands for advice).</p>

**C05 - Operation of fisheries, including the use of vessels and fishing gear, is made safer, more technically and socio-economically efficient, environmentally-friendly and compliant with rules at all levels**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Implementation of the recently adopted guidelines on bycatch management and reduction of discards (including capacity building at the national and regional levels).</p> <p>Continuation of the initiative for good management of fish landing sites and cleaner fishing harbours.</p>	

**C06 – Members and other stakeholders have achieved more responsible post harvest utilization and trade of fisheries and aquaculture products, including more predictable and harmonized market access requirements**

<i>Higher emphasis to:</i>	<i>Lower emphasis to:</i>
<p>Improved fish handling practices and reduction of post-harvest losses.</p> <p>Domestic distribution and marketing systems and the capacity of exporting developing countries to meet international requirements for certification, consumer protection and market access, including through access to market information and data.</p> <p>Improved transparency and predictability of international fish trade regimes.</p>	<p>Work on the substantive aspects of fisheries subsidies.</p>