

**Information to be contributed to FIRMS by
the Regional Commission on Fisheries (RECOFI),
a FAO associated partner**

The Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) will contribute to FIRMS along the following lines:

1. *Data and statistical information:*

Types and scope of information to be contributed

Reports on fisheries:

As a first priority, Fishery inventories developed under the leadership of RECOFI-FIRMS national focal points, validated at national level and further endorsed by both the RECOFI-SC and the FIRMS Secretariat will be structured for uploading and maintained in FIRMS. References to bibliography used to structure and update the inventories will be provided.

Reports on marine resources:

In a later stage, the list of “key species supporting main reference fisheries” identified during the RECOFI Workshop on Fishery Stock Indicators and Stock Status will be considered as a starting point for structuring and uploading a regional marine resources inventory that would eventually be maintained in FIRMS.

Data:

Regional Catch and Effort statistics for the RECOFI area will be provided at available public domain resolution as determined under the policies of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

Biology, ecology, fisheries and other information:

Fisheries inventories will be provided at national level with focus mainly on fishing activities including inputs, outputs and management information. Marine resources / stocks inventories would be provided at regional level within the RECOFI area, with information on their exploitation, assessment methods and state and trends descriptors if available.

Regulations and management:

Information on fisheries management will be furnished where possible with focus on management regime and status. Fishery Management Units, where formally established, will be created as entities embedding links to the fishing activities covered under such management.

RECOFI has mandated responsibility on FIRMS related matters, inter alia:

- to keep under review the state of the resources, including their abundance and the level of their exploitation, as well as the state of the fisheries based thereon;
- to formulate and recommend appropriate measures for the conservation and rational management of living marine, applying the precautionary approach and based on the best scientific evidence available;
- to keep under review the economic and social aspects of the fishing industry and recommend any measures aimed at its development;
- to assemble, publish or disseminate information regarding exploitable living marine resources and fisheries based on these resources;

2. Metadata and information management:Ownership and responsibilities

Fisheries:

As agreed by the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM), Member countries retain primary ownership (and control) for the content of the fisheries inventory and retain accordingly primary ownership of national inventories. The national inventories are eventually aggregated at regional level according to the harmonized framework set by the RECOFI WGFM which ensures, with the support of the FIRMS Secretariat, that agreed conventions, reporting norms, standards and overall consistency for the region are applied. Such role confers to the RECOFI WGFM the corporate ownership of the aggregated fisheries inventory, without which sign-off no information can be published in FIRMS. As FAO article XIV body, RECOFI is a FAO associated partner in FIRMS and as such, overall responsibility for the published information resides with FAO. This arrangement will be indicated in each fact sheet with the following statement “*This document provided, and maintained by RECOFI and owned by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is part of RECOFI Fisheries Reports – <country x> data collection*”.

Marine resources:

The information contributed to FIRMS will be elaborated under the aegis of the RECOFI-WGFM. Accordingly, primary ownership of the marine resources inventory lies with RECOFI. As above, overall responsibility for the published information eventually resides with FAO. This arrangement will be indicated in each fact sheet with the following statement “*This document provided, and maintained by RECOFI and owned by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is part of RECOFI Stock Status Reports data collection*”.

Standards to be used in this Partnership Agreement.

The information to be contributed by RECOFI will conform, where possible, with the Information Management Policy established by the FIRMS Steering Committee.

Methods of collection and processing

Fisheries inventory:

The inventories harmonization process at RECOFI level will be achieved as follows: RECOFI-FIRMS national focal points will lead the development of the inventory content using the FIRMS excel template and inventory guidelines. During this process, any harmonization issue which cannot be resolved will be recorded. The RECOFI-WGFM will examine the regionally aggregated inventory, and discuss and make decisions on the reported outstanding harmonization issues.

A successful outcome of the procedure described in the above paragraph would enable decision by RECOFI to publish the inventory in FIRMS. The WGFM agreed that the consolidated inventory of RECOFI fisheries should be a comprehensive one for being published in FIRMS. The RECOFI commission will eventually decide on its formal endorsement and publishing

Marine resources inventory:

The Marine resource inventory will be aggregated and validated under the aegis of RECOFI upon recommendation of the WGFM.

The FIRMS Marine resources inventory template is available as an “information collection mechanism” which countries are encouraged to use for compiling information about any additional resources in the regional inventory. These nationally contributed inventories will be used, amongst others, as sources for possible recommendation by relevant RECOFI working groups regarding the inclusion of more marine resources in the RECOFI inventory.

Bibliographical sources:

Bibliographic sources will be clearly listed in the Fisheries fact sheets and links provided to the electronic sources when available. Links to source RECOFI reports will be provided in the Marine resource fact sheets, while relevant bibliographic sources are contained in these reports.

Transmission protocols and dissemination channels.

Fisheries:

National fisheries inventories on which fact sheets are based are elaborated according to Excel or Word templates, stored within dedicated folders and periodically updated through review sessions of the RECOFI-WGFM. Their public dissemination occurs only through the FIRMS fact sheets, while dissemination of the Excel or Word sources might occur through specific requests to RECOFI-WGFM.

3. Data and Information security

All contributions from RECOFI will be in the public domain.

Transparency of the information and results on status and trends of fisheries, stocks, and resources and presented by RECOFI are documented in the course of the scientific peer-review process followed to obtain the results (contacts with RECOFI-FIRMS focal points and Workshops), and the various public RECOFI meetings (WGFM) at which the results, and various options for management and resource conservation, are presented and discussed. Details on these meetings and processes are available at FAO-FI web-site.

4. Other entitlements

As FAO associated Partner, the FIRMS representative of the RECOFI-SC is entitled to participate in the FIRMS meetings (FSC, and TWG). In

both the TWG and in the FSC, FAO attends as a single Member and accordingly the RECOFI-FIRMS representative will be part of the FAO delegation, and consult with the FAO representative in FIRMS on strategic matters eventually requiring a voting mechanism.