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Organización
de las
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Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES (RECOFI)

Fourth Session

Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 7–9 May 2007

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET: 2007–2008

SUMMARY

The document presents for discussion a proposal for RECOFI intersessional activities during the period 2007-2008. It examines current budget status and actual and projected cash flow and suggests a general activity plan based on priorities identified by Technical Meetings and direct contacts with member countries. A tentative estimate of the costs of the Programme is presented. The meeting is invited to review the proposal and provide guidance for its implementation.

I. FOLLOW-UP TO THE COMMISSION'S REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL INFORMATION

1. At its Third session (Doha, Qatar, 9–11 May 2005) the Commission through recommendations 16, 17 and 18, had requested the Secretariat to prepare and circulate periodical budget reviews and financial statements with the view of keeping Member countries informed on the financial status of RECOFI and providing comprehensive information and data to be used during future presentations of the Commission's Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

2. Specifically, the Member countries had requested that the Secretary prepared full and comprehensive financial reports including statements from the previous biennium. This request was fulfilled for the present Session. A second request had asked the Secretary to distribute updated budget reports on a quarterly basis. However, due to the absence of major

intersessional activities and related expenditures during 2006 a single financial statement was issued in February 2007 and incorporated into the present document.

II. FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF FEBRUARY 2007

3. The core budget of RECOFI takes the form of a multi-lateral trust fund project with FAO Code MTF/REM/001/MUL and title "Support to the Secretariat of RECOFI". The project started in April 2003 and has since been renewed on a yearly basis. Its budget is revised regularly in order to monitor the cash flow of expenditures and annual contributions by Member countries.

Opening balance

4. The opening balance for year 2007 is US\$118 226 and has the following five components:

Salaries of General Service staff	US\$20 000
Consultancies	US\$20 000
Travel	US\$45 000
Technical Support Services	US\$20 000
General Operating Expenses	US\$13 226
TOTAL	US\$118 226

Cash flow

5. RECOFI Member countries contribute US\$5 000/year each. Contributions are usually paid in May. For 2007–2008 it would be difficult to project the cash in-flow with good accuracy as some countries may decide to also pay outstanding contributions. It would nevertheless seem reasonable to assume that a minimum income in the order of US\$30 000 (six contributions) will be added to the opening balance of 2007 and another US\$ 35 000 (seven contributions) in 2008, expecting also some US\$ 10 000 of outstanding payments. These assumptions will be taken into consideration during the formulation of programmed activities for the period 2007–2008. In contrast, and with regards to programmed activities for 2007, no such assumption will be made and the delivery of 2007 activities (see next paragraph) is at this stage based exclusively on existing funds.

Estimated delivery for 2007

6. At present the estimated delivery for 2007 is set to US\$61 000. The reason for limiting 2007 expenditures to about 50 percent of the total available is only procedural and the purpose is to safeguard 2008 activities by assuming zero income during the period 2007–2008.

7. At present the estimated delivery of US\$61 000 includes:

General Operating Expenses	US\$6 000
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Salary GS staff	US\$20 000
Consultancies	US\$10 000
Travel	US\$15 000
<u>Technical Support Costs</u>	<u>US\$10 000</u>

TOTAL **US\$61 000**

- General Operating Expenses include costs relating to the Fourth session of RECOFI such as rental of equipment, consumables, publications, etc.
- Salary of General Service staff is budgeted at a standard annual rate of US\$20 000.
- US\$10 000 are allocated to future consultancies in support of the intersessional activities for 2007–2008.
- Travel will cover visits by consultants and FAO staff to RECOFI countries.
- Technical Support will cover re-fundable backstopping costs of FAO staff, from both HQ and the Cairo Regional Office.

8. The present financial statement does not intend to provide a full description of suggested programmed activities for 2007–2008. The paragraphs below will take into consideration both actual and projected incomes and expenditures and will reflect the views and priorities as these have been identified by the technical meetings and direct contacts with the Member countries. This would mean that with fresh income flowing in, RECOFI intersessional activities, once endorsed by the Commission, are not limited by the present estimated delivery for the current year and may even commence in the first semester of 2007.

9. In order to facilitate monitoring of the Commission's budget and expenditures by Member countries, the Secretary will be regularly issuing and distributing financial statements as soon as major changes occur during the new intersessional period.

III. PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES FOR 2007–2008

FISHERIES STATISTICS

The following major activities for the second semester of 2007 and for 2008 are envisaged:

Second meeting of the RECOFI Working Group on Fisheries Statistics (WGS)

10. There has so far been only one WGS meeting which was held in Shiraz, Islamic Republic of Iran, during 24-26 May 2004. Several major statistical issues such as improvement of the timeliness and accuracy of basic statistical data, better utilization of produced statistics and harmonization of data at regional level are still outstanding.

11. The Second meeting of WGS is to take place in the second half of 2007 and will mainly deal with Status and Trends of Fisheries issues (STF). The FAO-executed Global STF project is expected to make major contribution to this meeting in aspects concerning comparative studies among the ongoing fisheries statistical programmes of Member countries, compliance of statistical systems to regional and international standards and, Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The meeting will also examine catch trends as these are reflected by the regularly produced RECOFI database of capture fisheries production.

Strengthening of national fisheries statistical programmes

12. These activities will be spread over a period of 6–8 months and are to commence in the second half of 2007. They will involve the services of international and national consultants who will carry out functions relating to training, technical advice and assistance in the implementation of fisheries surveys. Purpose of these activities is to improve the performance of national fisheries statistical programmes and facilitate the harmonization of fisheries statistics at regional level. The RECOFI budget of US\$45 000 for consultancies and another US\$45 000 for travel will be used to support the activity costs; however in case additional funds would be needed these will come from external funding sources already identified by the Secretary.

Third meeting of WGS

13. The Third meeting of WGS is to take place in 2008 with the objective of evaluating progress in the implementation of follow-up actions relating to the aforementioned activities (paragraphs 10 to 12) and providing guidance for their sustainable continuation at national and regional levels. The meeting will also examine catch trends as these are reflected by the regularly produced RECOFI database of capture fisheries production. To be noted that the holding of the Second WGS in 2007 and the Third WGS and Fourth WGA in 2008, is in line with the RECOFI request for more frequent meetings of its two Technical Groups.

Preparation of technical documents

14. A number of statistical technical papers have recently been produced by FAO that are of relevance to the ongoing fisheries statistical programmes in RECOFI countries. Most of the documents address practical issues of data collection and processing and are intended for use by national staff responsible for planning and monitoring of field operations. At present these documents are available only in English. It is believed that their diffusion and utility should be much increased if they also become available in Arabic. Both RECOFI and external consultancy funds will be used for such activities.

AQUACULTURE

15. At the time of the preparation of the present document the Third meeting of the Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA) had not taken place (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 5–6 May 2007) hence the proposed aquaculture work programme below is preliminary and will be

integrated with the recommendations and suggestions expected to emerge during the above mentioned meeting.

16. The following major activities for the second semester of 2007 and for 2008 are nevertheless envisaged as already approved by the Commission at its Third session (Doha, Qatar, 9–11 May 2005). The Commission will be invited to review the programme of work as a whole and make suggestions on how to proceed particularly with the planned and approved activities which require financial support.

RECOFI Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS)

17. During the new intersessional period the RECOFI Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS) is expected to become fully functional, hosted by the Regional Centre in Kuwait and with an efficient and active network of focal points in all the RECOFI countries.

Administration and information contribution process

18. The RAIS will be organized and maintained through a regional and national mechanism: (1) a Regional Centre located in Kuwait and linked to the FAO in Rome and to the RECOFI Secretariat in Cairo, Egypt; and (2) a National Centre in each RECOFI Member country under the supervision of the officially nominated National Focal Point (NFP) of the RECOFI-WGA.

19. The role of the Regional Centre is multifunctional and will include: 1) collating and further verifying data provided by NFPs; 2) analyzing data and preparation of regional reports on the status and trend of aquaculture; 3) ensuring maintenance of the web site; 4) maintaining communication and information flow with the National Centres, the RECOFI Secretariat and FAO; 5) promoting RAIS; 6) preparing annual activity and progress reports for the WGA; 7) drafting annual work programme and budget for RAIS in coordination with NFPs and the WGA Chairman; and 8) soliciting external funding, also from the private sector, for strengthening and maintaining the system.

20. During the first phase of development of the RAIS, the NFPs will be responsible of the overall collection of national data and information from different national sources to feed into the system. Furthermore, they will also be responsible in generating, collecting and submitting relevant news on current and foreseen activities in the national aquaculture sector. The information thus collected will be uploaded on a regular basis in order to ensure that the system is continuously updated.

21. Once the information system has been launched the NFPs will also play a role in certifying data submitted by national registered users as well as updating specific data sets [e.g. National Aquaculture Sector Overview (NASO); national aquaculture statistics]. Furthermore the NFPs will also assist the Regional Centre in identifying and soliciting potential non-governmental and private source of funding to support and strengthen the RAIS network.

22. Each RECOFI Member country should set-up an efficient national RAIS network as well as to provide the National Focal Point with an adequate mandate and budget to cover both national duties and travel to the WGA meetings.

Immediate action from National Focal Points

23. At this stage of development of the RAIS, the NFPs are expected to provide the data and information requested to feed into the agreed databases of the system. If no delays are encountered in data submission in the next semester the new and completed system will be ready for launching both regionally and at the global level by October 2007. Furthermore, the NFPs will be responsible to ensure that the national network is established and feeds into the regional system. In particular they will also: 1) promote the new RAIS; 2) stimulate and supervise data entry at national level; 3) cooperate in updating and verifying data sets and information submitted; and 4) report problems to the RAIS Regional Centre and propose suggestions to further improve and strengthen the system.

24. At the regional level the main action required will be for the RAIS hosting country, Kuwait, to organize and make available at the appropriate time the necessary office space and support staff for the system. A close collaboration is expected to be established between the NFP of Kuwait and FAO to ensure a smooth handing over of the RAIS to the Regional Centre administrator and training of the RAIS Regional Centre staff on all the functions of the system. Following the establishment of the system the Regional Centre will also play a role in 1) stimulate and supervise data and information entry; 2) assist in training the National Focal Points in data entry; and 3) ensure adequate coordination and information flow at the Regional level

Aquaculture legal and policy framework project proposal

25. The “RECOFI aquaculture legal and policy framework project” proposal presented at the Third session of the Commission (Doha, Qatar, 9–11 May 2005) will require extra-budgetary funding for its implementation. As presented in document RECOFI/IV/2007/2 no concrete results have been achieved during the current intersessional period in securing the estimated funds of US\$157 700.

26. At the Third meeting of the WGA, planned to take place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 5 to 6 May 2007, the Focal Points are expected to report on follow-up actions with regards to securing the financial support mentioned in the paragraph above at the country level. The outcome of this meeting and any recommendations that may arise will be presented at the Fourth session of the Commission. Based on the up-to-date information exchanged between the Secretariat, the WGA Chairman and Focal Points it is unlikely that the funds have been secured from a single source or from all Members as an equal share of the total project estimated amount. The Commission will therefore be required to take a decision on how to move forward with respect to this pending activity.

Other envisaged activities

27. The other main activities envisaged by the WGA will focus on the following technical issues: 1) introduction of exotic species in the RECOFI region; 2) marine stock enhancement; and 3) artificial reefs. The main proposed actions and specific work plans related to each of the above three issues will be discussed and defined in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, during the Third meeting of the WGA. The Commission is invited to note that other technical issues may also be discussed and eventually included in the proposed work plan and budget of the WGA.

Working Group on Aquaculture – Budget proposal summary

28. The table below provides a summary of the proposed budget required for the implementation of the planned and envisaged activities under the Working Group on Aquaculture. Furthermore, the WGA will be informed that US\$45 000 will be available from the Commission existing budget to cover travel and consultancies for aquaculture related activities. As mentioned in the above paragraph the WGA will, at its Third meeting, define its proposed work plan and budget and present it to the Commission for consideration and approval.

Activity	Funds available (US\$)	Funds required (US\$)
RECOFI Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS)	30 000 ¹	
Aquaculture legal and policy framework project proposal		157 700 ²
Other technical meetings and workshops	45 000 ³	
FAO Technical Backstopping	15 000 ³	
<p>1: Funds provided by the Government of Kuwait. 2: Funds required (not yet secured). 3: Available funds of the Commission.</p>		

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

29. The Commission has expressed the need for the preparation of a RECOFI publication in the form of a bulletin. Given the undergoing work in developing RAIS, the establishment of a RECOFI statistical database of capture production data and the envisaged integration of other variables into regional datasets, it was thought that at the present stage the development of a RECOFI web site would be an easier and cheaper task which would also be the basis for future publications. It is envisaged that the initiation of work and first development stage will cost about US\$12 000. The Secretariat will seek external funds to support this activity and will communicate the outcome at the next issue of the RECOFI financial statement.

OPENING BALANCE FOR 2009

30. Table 1 illustrates a cash flow analysis for the period 2007–2008. The following assumptions have been made:

- US\$30 000 will be contributed in May 2007 (six countries)
- US\$35 000 will be contributed in May 2008 (seven countries)
- US\$10 000 will be paid as part of outstanding contributions

31. Based on the envisaged income and expenditures, the opening balance for 2009 (period of the Fifth RECOFI session) will be US\$33 226. This amount will be sufficient to cover the General Operating Expenses of the Fifth RECOFI session (estimated at US\$5 000) and the General Service Salaries for the first half of 2009 (US\$10 000), in case the 2009 contributions are paid later than May 2009.

Table 1: Estimated income and expenditures for 2007–2008.

RECOFI PWB 2007-2008	(B) 2007 Opening Balance	(C) 2007 Estim. Income	(D) 2007 Budget (B+C)	(E) 2007 Estim. Delivery	(F) 2007 Balance (D-E)	(G) 2008 Estim. Income	(H) 2008 Budget (F+G)	(I) 2008 Estim. Delivery	2009 Open. Balance (H-I)
TOTAL	118 226	30 000	148 226	90 000	58 226	45 000	103 226	70 000	33 226
General Operating Expenses	13 226			20 000				10 000	
Consultancies	20 000			30 000				15 000	
Travel	45 000			30 000				15 000	
Technical Support Services	20 000			20 000				10 000	
Salaries GS Staff	20 000			20 000				20 000	