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REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES

Seventh Meeting of the Working Group on Fisheries Management

Kuwait, State of Kuwait, 5-7 November 2013

Progress towards a regional fisheries management framework

Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to report on the decisions taken by the Commission on fisheries management in the RECOFI area and to highlight the priorities to be considered by the WGFM at its seventh meeting.

The WGFM is invited to:

- Take note of the Commission's decisions on fisheries management.
- Discuss the undertaking of follow up actions as requested by the Commission.
- Consider new information on the status of stocks in the region and draw up management advice, as appropriate.

1. At its 7th Session, the Commission took note of the activities undertaken by the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) during the intersessional period, the results obtained and the emanating advice for fisheries management. After extensive deliberations, the Commission, in particular:
 - noted the call of the WGFM for an urgent need to formulate **a regional management plan** for the narrow-barred Spanish mackerel, taking into account results obtained through the work undertaken by the Member countries and relevant regional entities and the joint research project to be designed by all Member countries.
 - acknowledged the WGFM advice on a reduction in shrimp trawling effort, effective implementation of regulations and management measures, as well as the consideration of socio-economic factors in the decision making processes and **advised the WGFM to further develop the concrete management procedures.**
 - did not endorse the WGFM advice related to the freeze on new fishing licenses.
 - endorsed the proposed revision of the list of species of common interest and **requested that the list be reviewed further and updated at the seventh meeting of the WGFM.**
 - agreed that assessments should be carried out using a longer time series of fishery dependent data which was not yet available and stressed on the importance of using survey data collected by the Fisheries Resources Committee of the GCC and national research programmes.
 - urged RECOFI Members to share the relevant data to facilitate the undertaking of scientifically sound joint complete assessments, the results of which would allow the Commission to take management decisions.
 - **urged the WGFM to formulate specific management advice in relation to fishing effort control**, taking into account the particular nature of fisheries and management plans in different countries.
 - proposed that **Members report to the WGFM at every session on the implementation of fisheries regulations and management measures** through a template prepared by the Secretariat.
 - recognized the need to establish a RECOFI regional database and information system maintained by the Commission in order to support regional fisheries management in the long term.
 - commended the outcomes of the workshop on bycatch management and low impact fishing and encouraged knowledge and experience sharing in the RECOFI region that would lead to develop a regional management measure to reduce bycatch in the future.
 - recognized that it is necessary to consider management measures which will safeguard the livelihoods of small-scale fishers and to develop a regional framework to address issues specific to small scale fisheries.
 - highlighted the need for consideration of the impacts of sport fishing on small-scale fisheries and **called upon the WGFM to consider the role of recreational fisheries in the context of national and regional fisheries management.**

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- **called for full commitment by Members in submitting relevant data and information** in support of the pilot joint assessment of narrow-barred Spanish Mackerel and workshop on the utilization of fishery dependent data.
 - encouraged the development of a project for the whole RECOFI region to support capacity development in stock assessment, building on the experience of the FAO subregional project covering GCC countries and Yemen.
 - encouraged the process of drawing up a regional plan of action to combat IUU fishing.
2. On the basis of the above, the WGFM is invited to note the Commission's decisions on fisheries management and to discuss and identify strategies to address the requests by the Commission to deliver further management advice, including the development of a regional management plan for the narrow-barred Spanish mackerel and other shared fishery resources, as appropriate. In doing so, the WGFM may wish to consider any new information on the status of stocks in the region, as well as the preparatory work for the regional joint stock assessment workshop on Spanish mackerel described in document RECOFI:WGFM7/2013/6.