

Expert Consultation on the Development of International Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries

Rome, Italy, 14 – 17 October 2003

Provisional Agenda

- 1) Election of chairperson and adoption of agenda
- 2) Recent trends in ecolabelling as applied in the fisheries, forestry and agricultural sectors

The Experts are invited to take note and comment on the FAO Secretariat document summarizing recent trends in the ecolabelling of forest and food products including fish and fisheries products.

- 3) Aspects and outcomes of the work relevant to ecolabelling of, *inter alia*, WTO, ISO and Codex Alimentarius

The Experts are invited to review and comment on the materials made available by the Secretariat from, *inter alia*, WTO, ISO and Codex Alimentarius relating to international agreements, guidelines and provisions of relevance to ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries.

- 4) Draft elements of international guidelines for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries

On the basis of the requirements expressed in Paragraph 53 and in accordance with Paragraph 54 of the Report of the 23rd Session of COFI, experts are invited to review and comment on draft elements of international guidelines for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from capture fisheries.

For convenience, the draft elements are presented in two sections as follows:

- A. Draft elements of international guidelines on **principles and criteria** for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries.
- B. Draft elements of international guidelines on **procedural and institutional aspects** for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries

These elements were drafted taking into account the materials reviewed under Agenda Item 3 as well as the principles contained in Paragraph 11 of the 1998 Technical Consultation on Ecolabelling Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. These ecolabelling principles are as follows:

- be of a voluntary nature and market driven;
- be transparent;
- be non-discriminatory, do not create obstacles to trade and allow for fair competition;
- establish clear accountability for the promoters of schemes and for the certifying bodies in conformity with international standards;
- there should be a reliable auditing and verification process;
- recognize the sovereign rights of States and comply with all relevant laws and regulations;
- ensure equivalence of standards between countries;
- be based on the best scientific evidence;
- be practical, viable and verifiable;
- ensure that labels communicate truthful information;
- must provide for clarity

5) Special requirements of developing countries and countries in transition to adopt ecolabelling of fish and fishery products

Experts are invited to examine the special conditions and requirements of developing countries and countries in transition to adopt ecolabelling of fish and fishery products and suggest measures how to address them.

6) Follow-up

The Report of the Expert Consultation will be submitted to the next Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade in February 2004 for consideration and further guidance on follow-up activities, if any, and their time frame. The Expert Consultation is invited to make suggestions on appropriate follow-up to its deliberations and propose a realistic time frame for the completion of international ecolabelling guidelines for fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries.