

August 2002



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

E

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Third Session

Zaragoza, Spain, 25-27 September 2002

PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK 2002-2004

INTRODUCTION

1. The proposed programme of work for the next intersessional period 2002-2004 includes four major components: (i) support to the Information Systems for Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SIPAM), Technology and Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (TECAM) and the Socio-Economic and Legal Aspects of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SELAM) networks (including activities related to environmental aspects previously under Environmental Aspects of Aquaculture Management in the Mediterranean (EAM)); (ii) one regular meeting of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ); and (iii) external collaboration within and outside GFCM. The fourth component includes fund-raising for additional activities of the CAQ indicated in the Plan of Action identified during the Consultation on Article 9 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

2. The fulfilment of the programme of work will largely depend on the implementation of the GFCM autonomous budget. If a decision on the GFCM budget is not reached at the Twenty-seventh Session of GFCM, the next biennium will again continue as a transitional operation, for which funds will have to be sought directly from the various partners, donors and interested countries.

ACTIVITIES PROPOSED FOR THE SIPAM NETWORK

Meetings

3. According to the original regulations, SIPAM should hold two meetings per year, one for the National Coordinators (SIPAM Annual Meeting) and a meeting of the Steering Committee. A meeting of the National Coordinators is planned for the second half of 2002. The recent Steering Committee Meeting (Rome, Italy 17-18 June 2002) confirmed that the next and 7th SIPAM Annual Meeting would be held in Morocco as proposed and accepted during the 6th SIPAM Annual Meeting (Rome, Italy, 10-12 January 2002). The National Coordinator of Morocco confirmed that the Government of Morocco would assist with internal logistics and arrangements. Casablanca has been indicated as the most convenient place to have the meeting. Funds for the above meeting have yet to be identified. In 2003 and 2004 the two annual meetings will also have to be held and again funds have to be identified.

4. The SIPAM Regional Coordinator will participate in GFCM and CAQ sessions.

New Member Countries

5. All GFCM member countries are automatically members of the SIPAM Network under the new agreement that is being ratified. At present 16 countries are active members, with Albania, Lebanon and Romania as the most recent entries. It is envisaged to facilitate the access of the remaining GFCM countries in the course of the biennium. A promotion of the network will be done by the SIPAM Regional Centre through visits to the countries, with the distribution of CD-ROMs of the system, specific documentation and demonstrations. Travel funds will be required in excess of those made available from Tunisia.

6. All the countries actively participating in the SIPAM Network are expected to contribute, through their National Coordinators, up-dated, complete and quality checked information and statistics, as required. With the new SIPAM portal now on-line, as the new means of disseminating such information to potential and interested end users, the National Coordinators are expected to feed their inputs with an increased frequency, as and when the information becomes available. The SIPAM Regional Centre will play a key role to ensure that such information is delivered and assist the National Coordinators, when necessary. The last SIPAM Steering Committee requested the SIPAM Regional Centre to follow-up on this matter with all the countries and to identify the problems, if any, that the National Coordinators might be facing. During the next biennium it is expected that the flow of information between all participating countries and the SIPAM Regional Centre be well underway and routinely organized.

SIPAM Portal

7. The first release of the SIPAM Internet portal (www.faosipam.org) was finalized in June 2002; however, a number of modifications will be required as the site is fully tested and used. The next important step of the process is the maintenance of the overall portal, particularly with regards to the inputs of new and/or corrected data records, news items, etc., in the SIPAM portal and sub-portal pages. The SIPAM Regional Centre has a leading role and will be fully involved in the maintenance and updating of the portal, which, according to the last Steering Committee Meeting, should be on a monthly basis. However, the new SIPAM Internet version is now far more dynamic and may require daily or weekly inputs in certain areas, in order to ensure that the portal provides the latest information and relevant news items of interest to the Mediterranean aquaculture sector. Specialized training will be required for staff at the SIPAM Regional Centre to prepare the Internet releases and to carry out all up-dating actions.

8. A contractual link with the SIPAM portal developers will have to be maintained at this stage in order to satisfy complex technical and server maintenance. This task will be maintained by FAO until the SIPAM portal is eventually transferred to a final hosting (e.g. GFCM server). The next foreseeable step in the development of the SIPAM portal is to effectively establish an interface to the FAO information system (FIGIS). Such expansion will enable SIPAM and FIGIS to communicate and exchange data and information as required.

9. In order to facilitate the communication flow between the SIPAM Regional Centre and the National Coordinators and all the experts included in the SIPAM databases, a communication tool will be developed. This facility will enable the SIPAM Regional Centre to automatically generate email address groupings (or 'Email Lists') for routine communication actions. The SIPAM web developers will be contracted to develop such a tool and funds will be required.

10. The '*forum*' facility of the SIPAM portal has been developed and the 'SIPAM National Coordinators' *forum* activated. Dedicated technical and country *fora* within the SIPAM portal will be developed and launched in order to facilitate the collection and dissemination of information. The first two technical *fora* to be launched shortly will be those on 'Fish Health' and 'Marketing and Trade'.

SIPAM Sub-Portal Partners

11. So far six SIPAM sub-portal partners have been identified, namely, ASFA (Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts), CIHEAM (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies), EAS (European Aquaculture Society), EU (European Union), FIGIS (FAO Fisheries Global Information System) and GFCM and allocated space in the SIPAM portal. The main purpose of the sub-portal partners is to assist future SIPAM web site users with rapid tracing of targeted and relevant information most likely, but not necessarily, existing in their official web site pages, but often difficult to trace.

12. The SIPAM Regional Centre will maintain a regular and dynamic communication with all the existing sub-portal contact points in order to ensure that relevant information and news items on Mediterranean aquaculture are supplied on a timely and regular basis. All news items provided by the sub-portal partners will be at this stage added to the pages of the sub-portals by the staff of the SIPAM Regional Centre. A foreseeable expansion of the SIPAM web site will, among other things, be the development of a dedicated and user-friendly software application that will enable all SIPAM sub-portal partners to independently up-date their own sub-portal pages. The development of such application will depend on the availability of funds and the willingness of the sub-portal partners to take on the task.

SIPAM Databases

13. The efforts so far deployed for the improvement of all the databases will be continued and intensified. The SIPAM Regional Centre will continue to filter all the SIPAM databases with the aim of adding only complete records into the SIPAM web site release. Currently about 30 percent of all existing entries have not been released through the SIPAM web site, as they are incomplete or regarded as unreliable. The SIPAM Regional Centre will continue working with the National Coordinators in order to ensure that new and existing records are entered into the various databases.

14. In connection with the Pathology database, the dedicated area in the SIPAM portal will initially contain the TECAM Survey on Mediterranean Aquaculture Diagnostic Laboratories. The survey was jointly organized by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) through the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza, Spain, (IAMZ), the FAO Fisheries Department, and the SIPAM Regional Centre.

15. This web area will also have a link to AAPQIS (Aquatic Animal Pathogen and Quarantine Information System). Furthermore, an AAPQIS sub-portal will be created and launched as soon as the new AAPQIS web site is released in late 2002. A large portion of the information in AAPQIS is applicable and of interest to the Mediterranean region. However, as the chapters of interest to the Mediterranean countries are yet to be developed, the current AAPQIS would only provide 'static' information. The role of SIPAM will focus, at this stage, on the identification,

collection and dissemination of 'dynamic' information of interest to the Mediterranean. Further development of the SIPAM fish health/pathology database may require support of FAO.

Reports

16. The preparation of specific country and/or technical reports based on the information available in the SIPAM databases will be possible as soon as the web developers complete the report generating software of the SIPAM portal. These reports will be generated according to requirements and availability of data in the various databases. The generation of quality reports relies on the information and data made available by the National Coordinators and processed and released by the SIPAM Regional Centre.

Development of National Networks

17. At present, the creation of national networks has started in several countries. In the course of the biennium, an effort will be made to add more countries, in particular, those with large aquaculture production sectors. The national networks should improve the data collection process by linking specialized institutions to the National Centres and also improve the utilization of the data contained in the system, thus increasing the interest of member countries in the system. The Regional Centre will be fully involved in the promotion of these national networks through daily contact and possible visits to the countries.

Consolidation of National Capacities and Strengthening of the Regional Centre

18. It will be necessary to organize a training programme on software utilization and on the organization of the national data flow for new member countries joining the network. It is expected that it should be possible to use the FAO/TCDC programme as well as the budget available at the Regional Centre for this purpose.

ACTIVITIES PROPOSED FOR THE SELAM AND TECAM NETWORKS

19. The activities included in the workplan for 2003 and 2004 for the two networks being coordinated by the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) have been proposed during the Third Meeting of the TECAM and SELAM Networks Coordination Committee held in Zaragoza, from 28 February to 1 March 2002. They were proposed taking into account the results of the elaboration of the Plan of Action agreed by the participants at the Consultation on the Application of Article 9 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the Mediterranean Region (Rome, Italy, 19-23 July 1999). The activities proposed have been prioritized according to thematic priorities as well as to the Networks' administrative capabilities.

20. The activities proposed would rely principally on the combination of the limited resources that the CIHEAM, with the technical and financial contribution from the FAO Fisheries Department, would be able to allocate to the TECAM and SELAM networks, initially without taking into consideration an eventual autonomous budget in GFCM. If this becomes available, a revised programme would be elaborated to include more activities, which have been selected as regional priorities by the countries at the above-mentioned meeting and consultation. It is evident that should the autonomous budget be available it will also permit improved assistance for the participation of aquaculturists from developing countries in the activities proposed.

21. The TECAM and SELAM workplan for 2003 and 2004 includes activities proposed and selected as Priority 1 during the Networks Coordination Committee Meeting. A second group of identified activities (Priority 2) could replace any of the Priority 1 activities or could be

implemented during the same workplan period or thereafter depending on the availability of the necessary funds.

22. Priorities 1 and 2 are listed as desirable activities. As a result of the decreasing trend in funding of such activities it may not be possible to implement all the activities and a reduced selection will have to be decided.

- The 2003-2004 workplan include (Priority 1 activities):

- (a) TECAM course on '*Advances in Fish Reproduction and their Application on Broodstock Management*'. This course is planned for February 2003 (Location: Zaragoza, Spain);
- (b) TECAM seminar on the '*Use of Vaccines and Chemotherapy in Mediterranean Aquaculture*'. This seminar is planned for May 2003 (Location: Izmir, Turkey);
- (c) TECAM seminar on '*Recirculation Systems and their Application in Aquaculture*'. This seminar is planned for October 2003 (Location: to be determined);
- (d) SELAM seminar on '*Aquaculture Legislation in Mediterranean countries*'. This seminar is planned for December 2003 (Location: to be determined);
- (e) SELAM workshop on '*Coastal Zonation for Aquaculture Development Purposes*'. This seminar is planned for February 2004 (Location: to be determined);
- (f) TECAM advanced course/seminar on '*Recent Developments in Mollusc Hatcheries Techniques*'. This course/seminar is planned for May 2004 (Location: to be determined);
- (g) SELAM workshop on '*Traceability of Aquaculture Products*'. This workshop is planned for October 2004 (Location: to be determined); and
- (h) Updating of the TECAM '*Survey on Mediterranean Aquaculture Diagnostic Laboratories*'. This activity will span throughout 2004.

- The Priority 2 activities proposed include:

- (i) TECAM course on '*Macro and Micro Algae Aquaculture Production*';
- (j) TECAM seminar on '*Genetics and Breeding of Mediterranean Aquaculture Species*';
- (k) TECAM seminar on '*Finfish Species Diversification*';
- (l) TECAM course on '*Bivalve Post-harvest Handling and Depuration*';
- (m) TECAM course on '*Offshore Mariculture*';
- (n) TECAM course on '*Good Aquaculture Management Practices*'; and
- (o) TECAM workshop on '*Recent Development in the Production and Use of Food for Larval Culture*'.

23. Due to the increasing difficulties of the partners involved in financing an adequate

aquaculture programme in the Mediterranean region the Committee is invited to consider re-launching the idea of the Regional Project presented at the Second Session of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture. The Regional Project could be up-dated and revised accordingly and would focus on implementing priority activities as outlined in the Plan of Action developed. Execution of the various activities could be carried out through the existing CAQ networks.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE GFCM COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

24. The Committee on Aquaculture meets every two years. The next and Fourth Session of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture should be held in 2004. The organization of this regular meeting will require the necessary funds. The main expense relates to the interpretation cost into the four languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish). The second major expense relates to the translation into French and printing of all the relevant session documents including the final report. The overall cost of the meeting will depend on the decision taken by the Committee on where to hold the next Session and depending on the availability of qualified interpreters. Funds for this meeting will be required. The First and Second Sessions of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture were hosted and funded by the Italian Government. The current and Third Session of the CAQ is funded by the Spanish Government.

EXTERNAL COLLABORATION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE GFCM

25. The GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) held its Fifth Session from 1 to 4 July 2002 in Rome, Italy. On the basis of the report of the Joint GFCM/ICCAT Meeting on Stocks of Large Pelagic Fishes in the Mediterranean (Sliema, Malta, 15-19 April 2002), SAC noted that the practice of collecting bluefin tunas and their rearing in floating cages was rapidly spreading in the Mediterranean. SAC further acknowledged that the rapidly evolving nature of this industry is generating a number of problems that makes the management of the bluefin stock more difficult.

26. After discussing the issue of tuna farming practices, including its definition, SAC recommended to establish an *ad hoc* working group to develop a Code of Best Practices on Sustainable Tuna Farming/Fattening in the Mediterranean. It was proposed that the working group should comprise scientists with expertise covering the areas listed in the draft terms of reference of the group (attached as Annex 1). The working group would be further co-ordinated between SAC, the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture and the ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS).

27. CAQ may wish to review the proposal made by SAC, particularly the draft terms of reference for establishing a Joint GFCM/SAC/CAQ and ICCAT/SCRS working group and to consider including such an activity in its work programme.

28. Efforts will be initiated to strengthen the relationship with the current regional AdriaMed project (Scientific Co-operation to Support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic Sea) funded by the Italian Government. The meeting on interactions between the capture fisheries and aquaculture sectors will be a priority activity to jointly organize through AdriaMed.

29. Furthermore, liaison with organizations such as the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) and the European Aquaculture Society (EAS) will also be strengthened. The contribution of both FEAP and EAS to the SIPAM sub-portal pages (as well as that of other sub-portal partners) will be encouraged with the aim of establishing a regular communication flow. Liaison with the above organizations will also focus on discussing the activities prioritized in the Plan of Action with the objective of identifying ways and means of jointly implementing them.

Contacts with organizations such as The Arab Union for Fish Producers will initially be established by SIPAM through the Regional Centre in Tunis.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON FUNDING REQUIREMENT

30. In order to carry out the regular SIPAM meetings (Annual and Steering Committee) and secure the implementation of the various activities proposed in the programme of work, funds will have to be secured directly from the various partners and interested countries. A budget can only be allocated once the necessary number of countries ratifies the GFCM agreement.

31. The table below provides an estimate of the funds required for the implementation of the proposed activities.

SIPAM		US\$
Meetings		
Three Annual Meetings (2002, 2003, 2004) ⁽¹⁾		75 000
Two Steering Committee Meetings (2003, 2004) ⁽²⁾		12 000
New Member Countries & National Network Organization		
Country visits		5 000
SIPAM Portal		
Portal technical and server maintenance ⁽³⁾		5 000
Portal development and expansion		5 000
Communication tool software		1 000
TECAM/SELAM		
Workplan for 2003 and 2004 - Ten courses/seminars/workshops ⁽⁴⁾		320 000
CAQ SESSION		
Fourth CAQ Session ⁽⁵⁾		40 000

(1) The cost of organizing these meetings will vary depending on the location selected. In order to maintain expenses at a minimum the tendency is to support the travel of National Coordinators from less developed countries. The FAO Fisheries Department supports the travel expenses of its staff involved. The host country often covers costs of a meeting room and related local logistics.

(2) Two National Co-ordinators and two FAO staff attend the Steering Committee meeting.

(3) This task will be maintained by FAO until the SIPAM portal is eventually transferred to the FAO server.

(4) The estimated direct cost for the organization of the activities included in the TECAM and SELAM workplan for 2003 and 2004 has been calculated on the basis of former activities. For the financing of these activities, the CIHEAM and FAO will take them into consideration when elaborating their respective budgets. In addition, FAO and CIHEAM will search for the financial support in other national or international organizations, as well as for the contribution of the institution/s to co-participate in the organization of a given activity.

(5) The next CAQ Session will be held in 2004. Estimated direct costs include interpretation in four languages, translation and printing of documentation.

32. The SIPAM Network is becoming progressively efficient with the aid of the tools developed and provided, but to ensure its adequate growth and expansion support from the FAO Regular Programme is still required until the approval of the GFCM autonomous budget. Support from the FAO Fisheries Department will consist of: (i) the provision of the Technical Secretariat of the GFCM CAQ, which included SIPAM amongst its networks, in defence of the interest of the aquaculture communities in the region; (ii) the provision of assistance for the organization of all

SIPAM related meetings as well as coordination with the TECAM and SELAM networks for aspects related to the SIPAM databases; (iii) the provision of funding from the Regular Programme, mainly for travel, contracts and consultancies linked to the evolution of the SIPAM network and system; (iv) liaison with FAO FIRM to obtain the services of the SIPAM Designer; and (v) liaison with donors to obtain extra-budgetary funds to cover the costs of meetings and other activities.

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE

33. The Committee is requested to discuss the proposed programme of work and the funding requirement for the next intersessional period 2002-2004 of the Networks and other activities linked to the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture.

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF THE GFCM/SAC/CAQ AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE TUNA
FARMING/FATTENING PRACTICES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Taking into account:

- the recommendation of the Fourth GFCM Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment (Barcelona, Spain, 6-9 May 2002) to “.... *propose to the SAC the creation of a crosscutting working group with the mandate to elaborate a Code of Conduct on Sustainable Tuna Farming Practices in the Mediterranean, to provide common guidelines to make this activity a sustainable practices...*”;
- the “*Impacts of farming*” listed in the report of the Sixth GFCM-ICCAT Meeting on Stocks of Large Pelagic Fishes in the Mediterranean (Sliema, Malta, 15-19 April 2002) which include statistical effects, biological effects, management effects, potential environmental effects, potential social and economical effects, potential management effects and the proposed potential solutions;

The *Ad Hoc* Working Group will:

- prepare a draft “Technical Guidelines on Sustainable Tuna Farming/Fattening Practices in the Mediterranean” to be later discussed in the appropriate *fora*;
- follow-up with the potential solutions to reduce the impacts of farming and propose actions for their implementation, taking into consideration the list of issues to be addressed (below).

To maximize the efficiency of the Working Group and in consideration of its functions as drafting committee, it is suggested to convene a limited number of experts. Participants to the Working Group could be a representative of each GFCM/SAC Sub-Committee (i.e. Economic and Social Sciences, Marine Environment and Ecosystems, Statistics and Information, Stock Assessment), representative(s) of the GFCM Committee on Aquaculture and representative(s) of ICCAT.

List of issues to be addressed

Statistical issues :

- Accurate estimation of total weight of the catch from the wild.
- Accurate estimation of the biological characteristics of the catch from the wild (e.g. size composition).
- Accurate statistics on the origins of the catch (flag, area, season, transfer and destination).
- Accurate statistics on purse seine fishing operations (e.g. fishing effort and fishing strategy).
- Accurate estimates of growth and conversion rates in cages.

Biological issues :

- Availability of biological samples to perform scientific studies (e.g. fecundity, reproduction and growth).

Management issues :

- Monitoring of compliance with current regulations (e.g. TACs and size limits).
- Gear conflicts (e.g., between towed cages and long lines).
- Shifts in the spatial-temporal distribution of fishing efforts.

Potential environment issues :

- Impact on wild marine populations used as bait.
- Pollution, contamination and possible alteration of local environments.
- Contamination of farmed tunas by chemicals, metals, drugs, etc.

Potential social and economical issues :

- Interactions with other coastal activities (e.g. tourism and small-scale fisheries).
- Other gear and fishing operation conflicts.
- Conflicts between aquaculture operations (competition for bait).

Potential management issues :

- Pressure to increase fishing efforts and targeting of small to medium-size bluefin tuna.

Other issues (as deemed necessary by the Working Group).