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**CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE COMMISSION**



FOURTH SESSION
18-20 May 2015 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
SECRETARIAT REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this document is to report on the administrative and financial actions taken since the last session. Covered issues include, but are not limited to, the following: CACFish activities, publications, the status of membership to CACFish, the status of payment of the membership contributions to the autonomous budget, and the review of expenditures made in 2014-2015 inter-sessional period.
2. The document needs to be read in conjunction with the following documents: Commission Budget and Member Contributions for 2015 (CACFish/IV/2015/6); Five-year Regional Work Programme (2011-2015) of the Commission (CACFish/IV/2015/Inf.5); the Financial Regulations of the Commission (CACFish/IV/2015/Ref.2) and the Agreement on the Establishment of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement”) (CACFish/IV/2015/Ref.1).
3. The CACFish Secretariat is responsible, among others for, (i) effective and efficient operations of the Commission; (ii) preparation and submission of estimated annual expenditures; regular monitoring and reporting of budget; (iii) running of the 5-year Work Programme of the Commission with technical supervision of Technical Advisory Committee; and (iv) reporting to the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN), a collaborative institutional set-up for which FAO provides secretariat services.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

4. During the inter-sessional period, the Commission was supported with secretariat assistance from FAO Sub-regional Office (FAOSEC) based at Ankara, Turkey. The Secretariat is serviced

by a Secretary (Mr Thomas Moth-Poulsen) and two temporary staff (Ms Rufina Sandzhar and Mr Haydar Fersoy). The recruitment of permanent CACFish Secretariat staff is anticipated to be effectuated in future time when the Commission has a significantly increased budget. The Secretariat is currently located at the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (FAOSEC) which is based at Ankara, Turkey.

Events organized during the intersessional period

5. During the intersessional period the following events were organized:

- Regional Workshop on Inland Hatchery Management (27-30 October 2014, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic). The Workshop was organized under the 2014 work programme of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
- Third Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (16-18 February 2015; Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic). The Session was attended by representatives of all CACFish Member States, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey. Also participating in the session were representatives from three invited States: Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

6. The Commission has decided to allocate special effort to convene its events (i.e. sessions and meetings) with sufficient number of attendance from both its Members and from non-CACFish Member States. In this context, invitations were sent to Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan in respect of the inter-sessional period activities referred to in paragraph 5 above. It seems likely that without financial support of Commission both the Member States and Invited States would not join the events of the Commission.

External meetings in which the Commission was represented

7. During the inter-sessional period, the Commission was represented at the following international platforms: (i) The 31st Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, Italy; 9-13 June 2014); and (ii) FABA 2014: International Symposium on Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences (Trabzon, Turkey; 25-27 September) and Fifth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (Rome, Italy; 7-13 June 2014).

Status of 5-year regional work programme (2011-2015) of the Commission

8. Due to arrears in member contributions as well as lack of extra budgetary donations, no specific activity was undertaken under the 5-year Regional Work programme (2011-2015) (RWP) of the Commission during the reporting period. At its Third Session the Commission therefore did not adopt implementation of any specific work item stipulated in the RWP.

9. The Commission, at its Second Session, underlined the importance of allocation of a sufficient budget for the RWP while at the same time suggesting several remedial options, including updating of the RWP or extension of its implementation period.

10. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat produced the following CACFish report:

- Report of the Third Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2-4 June 2014. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1045. Ankara, 2013.
Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3988b.pdf>
- Report of the Third Session of the Technical Advisory Committee (16-18 February 2015, Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic) FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. R1107. Ankara, 2015.

11. The inter-sessional events of the Commission were publicized on the FAO periodical Aquaculture Newsletter (FAN), which is distributed free of charge to all FAO members.

Status of acceptance of Agreement

12. CACFish Membership status remained unchanged since Third Session of Commission (2014). With Azerbaijan's attendance, the number of CACFish members reached five in 2014, as summarized below:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. Armenia | 3 December 2010 |
| 2. Azerbaijan | 8 March 2013 (Accepted for deposit on 22 March 2014) |
| 3. Kyrgyzstan | 3 May 2010 |
| 4. Tajikistan | 9 March 2010 |
| 5. Turkey | 19 December 2011 |

Source: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/legal/docs/2_036s-e.pdf

13. Pursuant to the decision taken at the Inaugural Session (2011), the Secretariat continued to take follow-up action on Commission's calling on non-Member States to become CACFish members. In this context, a letter was sent on 13 March 2015 to the Government of Kazakhstan, who showed increasing interest in the activities of CACFish. In line with the earlier decision of the Commission, invitations were extended to non-CACFish member States to attend the Inter-sessional period event of the Commission. This seems to be a useful way to enhance technical regional cooperation, particularly in strengthening technical capacity and in the dissemination of the outcomes of the CACFish activities.

Recommendations adopted under Article V of the CACFish

14. The Commission adopted, since its Inaugural Session held in 2011, a considerable number of recommendations, submitted to it by TAC. Listed below are all adopted recommendations of the Commission:

- Guidelines for Sturgeon Hatchery Practices and Hatchery Management for Release (2011),
- Feasibility of Restocking and Culture-based Fisheries in Central Asia (2011),
- Better Management Practices for Carp Production in Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (2011),
- Recommendations on Fishery and Aquaculture Statistics and Information (2011).
- Environmental impact assessment in aquaculture (2013),
- Regional principles for responsible aquaculture in Central Asia (2013),
- Responsible introductions and transfers of fish in Central Asia and the Caucasus (2013),
- Improvement of collection, analysis, and dissemination of fisheries data and information. (2013),
- Inland fisheries stock assessment (2014),
- Regional strategic principles for climate change (2014), and
- Fish breeding and broodstock management (2014).

15. The scientific recommendations referred to in above paragraph were viewed by the Commission as successful instruments directly contributing to its ultimate set of management, conservation and development objectives. The Commission so far generated an average of almost four technical/scientific recommendations per session that fall under varying thematic areas. The issues that were brought up in the recommendations were generally relevant to priority areas set by the Technical Advisory Committee at its first Session (2012) and the issues that were considered by the Commission to be of particular importance to the CACFish competence area. As stated at the third Session of Commission (2014), these cumulative recommendations need to be translated into nation-wide practices through coordinated work. Continued effort needs to be made to promote sustainable management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in CACFish competence area where recovery of inland fisheries has proceeded at a slow pace at certain developing countries. Proper implications of scientific advice in fisheries require a greater commitment from the government, industry and other key stakeholders. The relevance and contribution of such recommendations to regional and national practice levels would be further strengthened by making the key stakeholders aware of the potential outcomes of such recommendations which help the Member States accomplish the national fisheries/aquaculture objectives. Given that the developing Member States face a range of socio-economic challenges in addition to the limited resources and expertise available, it would take relatively longer time for them to put the recommendations into practice.

16. It should be noted that the recommendations referred to in 14 have not been submitted to the Commission in accordance with the Article V (Recommendations on development and management measures) of the Agreement. They are therefore not legally binding. However, the Members are expected to adhere to the adopted recommendations by gradually integrating them into national practices. A fisheries management system that, in part or whole, involves or relies on scientific advice and consultation processes in fisheries decision making is seemingly not widely practiced. This, on the other hand, makes the role of Technical Advisory Committee more critical in providing scientific support for the formulation and development of regional management policies and decision-making.

17. Being a body established by a treaty under the Article XIV of FAO Constitution, CACFish is empowered to impose legally-binding decision in the form of “Recommendations” in pursuant to provisions of the above-mentioned Article V of the Agreement. In this regard, the Secretariat underlines a possible need for enforcement of legally-binding recommendations in terms of visibility and effective functioning of the Commission.

18. In accordance with the decision of the Commission, TAC will convene, starting from 2015, in every two years, an essential change bringing associated operative implications for the working mode of the annual Session of the Commission. In the years when TAC has no regular Meeting, for instance in 2016, at its annual sessions, the Commission will not have any agenda item on new scientific/technical recommendations from TAC. Therefore, unless otherwise decided, annual sessions of CACFish to be convened in such years will mostly be limited to the administrative and budgetary issues. The Secretariat would like to bring that issue to the attention of Commission.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Monitoring of CACFish budget

19. An individual budget account for CACFish under the trust fund of FAO was opened in September 2012. The Secretariat has since then been monitoring the CACFish autonomous budget through the Oracle-based electronic budget system operated by FAO.

Status of Contributions to autonomous CACFish budget

20. The first autonomous budget of CACFish became operational in 2012, following its approval at the Inaugural Session (2011). The 2012 autonomous budget partly relied on external contributions from the Non-Member States who joined the inter-governmental meetings that led to the establishment of CACFish in 2010. Since 2013, the autonomous budgets of the Commission have been adopted only on the basis of the existing members as stipulated by the legal and financial regulations and rules of the Commission.

Payments and of arrears***Arrears in the payment of contributions***

21. Prompt payment of member's contributions is of high importance for the proper implementation of the scheduled activities of the Commission. The Secretariat sent reminder letters in July 2014 to the member States in arrears. As seen in the table given in Annex I, no Member State in arrears paid back its dues for 2012 and 2013. The early arrears therefore remain unchanged at the time of writing of this report. On the other hand, 4 Member States were in arrears in the payment of their contributions for 2014: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, who made a partial payment in several instalments during the inter-sessional period, and Tajikistan. Total contributions received for the 2014 amounted to USD about 124,199 accounting for 69 percent of total budget.

22. Financial regulations V (3) of the Commission states that "Contributions shall be due and payable in full within 30 days of the receipt of the communication of the Secretary". It further states that "As of 1 January of the following calendar year, the unpaid balance of such contributions shall be considered to be one year in arrears".

Extra-budgetary contributions

23. No voluntary extra-budgetary contribution was received during the inter-sessional period, and therefore no activity was funded by extra-budgetary sources. (The financial contributions occasionally provided by the host countries for translation and simultaneous interpretations services, remain the main extra-budgetary funding sources, as was the case with the Third Session of CACFish hosted by Azerbaijan).

Expenditures

24. No expenditure was made under the 2012 autonomous budget due to arrears of the Member States. The first expenditures within the CACFish budget were therefore only made in 2013.

25. The Annex I present the financial highlights for 2012, 2013, and 2014 indicating incomes, breakdown of the expenditures and balances. As of 6 April 2015, available total budget was USD 107,507. The Status of member contributions is detailed in the Annex II.

SUGGESTED ACTION FOR THE COMMISSION

26. In view of all of the above, the Commission is invited to note this report and provide further general guidance.

**Annex Table I:
Financial highlights for 2012, 2013 and 2014 (as of 6 April 2015)**

	2013	2014	2015
<i>Income</i>			
Budget*		180,000	
<i>Member contribution-received</i>		124,199	
<i>Arrear contribution-received</i>			
<i>External contribution</i>		-	-
<i>Total income</i>		124,199	
<i>Expenditures</i>			
Consultancy, including temporary Secretariat staff		57,068	22,266
Contracts		15,000	
Travel		90,011	20,620
General operation cost*		1,303	920
FAO Support cost (5.9 %)		9,345	2,584
<i>Total expenditure</i>		167,727	46,390
BALANCE	197,425 **	153,897	107,507

* Generally includes postage, printing and stationery expenses

** Updated

**Annex Table II:
Status of member contributions as of 6 April 2015 (all figures are in USD)**

<i>Members</i>	Years										<i>Total balance (2012-2014)</i>
	2012	2013				2014				2015	
	<i>Arrears</i>	<i>Payment of arrears (Prior year)</i>	<i>Contribution</i>	<i>Payment</i>	<i>Arrears</i>	<i>Payment of arrears (Prior years)</i>	<i>Contribution</i>	<i>Payment</i>	<i>Arrears</i>	<i>Payment of arrears (previous years)</i>	
Armenia	4,669	-	15,266	-	15,266	-	14,601	-	14,601	-	- 34,536
Azerbaijan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	25,568	-	25,568	-	-25,568
Kyrgyzstan	2,400	2,400	7,420	3,072 *	4,348	-	10,931	6,382	4,549	-	- 8, 897
Tajikistan	2,401	-	7,630	-	7,630	-	11,083	-	11,083	-	-21,114
Turkey	14,020	14.020	127.662	127.662	-	-	117,817	117,817	-	N/A	-

* Updated