

March 2015



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



FOURTH SESSION
18-20 May 2015 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this document is to report on the activities of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) which were undertaken during the intersessional period. The document also summarizes the advice, recommendation and conclusions of TAC. The document needs to be read in conjunction with the document CACFish/IV/2015/Inf.4 (Report of the Third Meeting of Technical Advisory Committee).

ACTIVITIES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

2. During the intersessional period, the following two activities were carried out in accordance with the respective work programme of TAC approved by CACFish at its Third Session (2-4 June 2014, Baku, Azerbaijan): (i) Regional Workshop on Inland Hatchery Management; and (ii) the Third Meeting of TAC.

3. The Regional Workshop on Inland Fish Hatchery Management held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic from 27 to 30 October 2014. It was attended by 17 participants from CACFish Member States, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey as well as from two non-CACFish Member States namely Georgia and Kazakhstan.

4. The Third Meeting of TAC was organized in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Republic from 16 to 18 February 2015. The Session was attended by 5 Member States: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkey. Also attending were the following non-CACFish Member States: Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

5. The Third meeting of TAC generated the following recommendations per the thematic areas that were discussed, taking into consideration the framework and key issues highlighted by the background documents prepared by CACFish Secretariat for the Meeting.

Fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS)

6. Monitoring, control and surveillance was regarded as one of essential elements of fisheries management at local, national and regional levels. The Committee broadly agreed that effective MCS instruments are generally not in place in the Central Asian and Caucasus Region. Promotion of voluntary compliance through gradual capacity building was suggested. Socio-economic conditions, weak legal and institutional enforcement frameworks were identified as the key factors leading to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The Committee recommended that consideration be given to establishment of a Compliance Committee. TAC further agreed on continuation of its work in future on Fisheries MCS and IUU fishing and related issues.

7. The Committee adopted the following combined recommendations of the Regional Workshop on Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan between 2 and 4 October 2012) and the Regional Workshop on Management, Assessment and Monitoring of Inland Fisheries Resources, which was organized in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 26 to 29 May 2014:

- Development of more directed works on MCS and combatting IUU Fishing under CACFish,
- Consideration of establishment of a Compliance Committee under CACFish,
- Participation of Central Asian region into the universal MCS network,
- Establishment of a regional MCS network in Central Asia,
- Encouragement of attendance of experts of Central Asian and Caucasus region to the related works of FAO, i.e. expert meeting, technical consultation, and sub-committee meetings,
- Application of precautionary approach in the absence of updated scientific national data and information,
- Development/improvement of fishing licensing system,
- On-board overseas training of ministerial staff on fisheries MCS,
- More regional and national focus on MCS in small-scale fisheries,
- Study visits and observations on MCS tools, including vessel monitoring system, fisheries information system, fishing license system, and vessel registry system,
- Formulation and implementation of a regional project on MCS and combatting IUU fishing,
- Review and updating of national fisheries legislation for strengthened frameworks for deterring, eliminating and preventing IUU fishing,
- Harmonization of national technical regulation at regional level,
- Development of better management practices for MCS,
- Promotion of development of national policies to combat IUU fishing.
- Promotion of the development and implementation of internationally agreed market-related measures to combat IUU fishing,
- Strengthening institutional, administrative structuring for MCS and enforcement

against IUU fishing,

- Review of current national fisheries legislation for strengthened frameworks for MSC,
- Promotion of preventative controls and monitoring,
- Ad-hoc trainings on vessel monitoring system, fisheries information system, fishing license system, and vessel registry system, and fisheries controlling,
- Promotion of the establishment national/regional databases and other information systems, including data/information on fishing vessels, catch, effort, etc,
- Promotion of voluntary compliance with law and management rules through a process of education, awareness and participatory approach, and
- Promotion of public awareness of the impacts of IUU fishing.

8. TAC suggested the following broad-range actions which are associated with capacity building, taking into account the essential role of MCS in sustainable fisheries:

- Development of guidelines for controlling and inspecting capture fisheries and aquaculture;
- Development or updating of fishing permits, national logbooks, landing declarations and sale notes;
- Promotion of fisheries co-management for increased compliance;
- Development of national and regional cooperation mechanisms for preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing and related activities;
- Development, implementation and updating of national MCS Strategies and national action plans to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing;
- Promotion of increased compliance with international best practices and regulatory frameworks with respect to IUU fishing (i.e. FAO International Plan of Action against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing);
- Promotion of baseline stock and ecosystem assessments before issuing fishing or water body utilization licenses;
- Implementation of specific MCS measures for rare and endangered fish species as well as aquatic ecosystems,
- Promotion of socio-economic research in fisheries,
- Regional capacity building for research, data collection and analysis in respect of fisheries MCS and IUU fishing;
- Promotion of voluntary compliance with applicable fisheries law, rules and regulations;
- Promotion of coordination and exchange of information and data between respective national agencies;
- Promotion of increased fisheries control, inspection and monitoring.

Inland fish hatchery management

9. Diversified and modernized hatchery production was seen essential for competitive development of aquaculture both in CACFish competence area and in the Central Asian and Caucasus region where diverse practices are in place. Local and national priorities were linked to regional challenges and opportunities. The Committee further noted the pressing need for transfer of technology, know-how, and expertise in order to improve aquaculture across the Central Asian and Caucasus region. The need for sustainable supply of seed and fry was also regarded as an essential strategic component of such planning. Promotion of inland fish hatchery management

through a strategic planning was suggested. Modernization of the existing hatcheries as well as development and implementation of protocols, methodologies and standards were seen necessary. Roles were given to hatcheries in fish stock enhancement and fish conservation. TAC was of the wide view that research and development programmes have not found wide application in region's hatchery production operations.

10. TAC identified the following prioritized research needs in respect of the inland hatchery management in CACFish competence area:

- Undertaking an inventory of fish hatchery research activities in the CACFish area;
- Undertaking a study on economic profitability of fish hatcheries,
- Upscaling of certified fry production,
- Fish hatcheries development strategy,
- Introducing modern full hatchery production cycle,
- Larval production and feeding of new species,
- Developing technical criteria and minimum requirements for aquaculture site selection,
- Developing technical criteria and minimum requirements for hatcheries,
- Undertaking research and on-farm trials for possible species for diversification of aquaculture production,
- Science-based broodstock management, including pedigree-based genetic selection.

11. Development and implementation of effective plans, measures and guiding principles were seen essential in terms of the future steps for improved inland hatchery management. With these considerations, the following actions were recommended:

- Development of national and regional hatchery programmes,
- Assessment of impact of farmed-fish on wild aquatic genetic resources
- Development of technical guidelines and protocols of hatchery production cycle,
- Promotion of better management practices for hatchery production and operations, and
- Implementation of standards for certification.

Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication

12. TAC noted that the definition of “small-scale fisheries” varies greatly across national and regional contexts. The Committee agreed that the guidelines reflect well the sector's commitment to raise the profile of small-scale fisheries while respecting the internationally recognized human-right based principles. TAC further agreed that the guidelines provide a useful framework and approach for the promotion of the contribution of small-scale fisheries to a sustainable future. Key challenges for effective implementation of the guidelines include the lack of reliable data on small-scale fisheries, political commitment, proper stakeholder engagement and enhanced stakeholder networking, and fisheries policy and strategy development for sustainable management of small-scale fisheries. The Committee agreed to reveal the current profile of small-scale fisheries in CACFish competence area by establishment of a working group.

13. TAC recommended the following actions with respect to implementation of the Guidelines in CACFish competence area:

- Enforcement of the framework for a regional strategy and associated principles for aquatic animal health management in CACFish area.
- More management attention to less-focused areas (i.e. decent work, gender roles in fisheries, etc.),
- Analysis and characterization of small-scale fisheries in Central Asian and Caucasus Region,
- Collection, analysis and dissemination of small-scale fisheries data and information,
- Promotion of co-management and traditional knowledge,
- Promotion of the implementation of integrated fisheries management systems in line with the international fisheries instruments, including the Guidelines, FAO's Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, and FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
- Development and implementation of technical measures and applications (i.e. certification systems for fish introductions; certification in the export and import of live fish, seed and eggs) and technical guidelines for these trade-based measures, and
- Networking among research institutions and researchers with a focus on interdisciplinary fisheries research with respect to small-scale fisheries.

Other issues

14. TAC revised the progress with the 5-year Work Programme of CACFish (2011-2015) and reviewed the second term 5-year Work Programme (2016-2010) prepared by CACFish Secretariat.

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015-2017 INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD:

15. TAC agreed on the following activities for the 2015-2017 intersessional period:

Activity	Date	Estimated budget (USD)	Place
1. Regional expert meeting on conservation of genetic resources of fish	Sept 2015	30.000	Turkey
2. Regional expert group work on Small-scale Fisheries	2015	10.000	TBD
3. Workshop on the collection of fisheries data and information	Sept 2016	25.000	Kyrgyzstan
4. Workshop on habitat rehabilitation	May 2016	30.000	Tajikistan
5. A pilot study of inland stock assessment in Tajikistan.	2016	30.000	Tajikistan
6. Fourth Meeting of TAC	February 2017	30,000	TBD

SUGGESTED ACTION FOR THE COMMISSION

16. In the light of the above considerations, the Commission is invited to review the activities carried out by TAC during the intersessional period and to provide further guidance on next steps.