



<b>WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION</b> Tenth Session
<b>WECAFC LESSER ANTILLES FISHERIES COMMITTEE</b> Seventh Session
Bridgetown, Barbados, 24-27 October 2001
<b>INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS, AND PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES</b>

## Introduction

1. The aim of this document is to inform the Commission on inter-sessional activities, actions taken by the Secretariat as follow-up to the recommendations of the Ninth Session of the Commission, Saint Lucia, September 1999, and progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The document is divided into three sections. Section A, provides information on the actions taken with respect to the recommendations of the Ninth Session of the Commission, Section B, contains a listing of major FAO regular programme activities and fisheries projects in the region during the inter-sessional period, and Section C, provides information on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

### A. ACTIONS TAKEN ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NINTH SESSION

2. The majority of FAO regular programme activities and projects in the WECAFC region (Section B) were initiated as a consequence of the recommendations of the Ninth Session of the Commission.
3. A regional workshop on the Effects of Globalisation and Deregulation on Fisheries in the Caribbean was held in Saint Lucia, 4-8 December 2000.
4. FAO co-sponsored and participated in the Second International Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*) Conference, 17-20 July, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
5. The following groups continued their activities as *ad hoc* working groups. For details refer to document WECAFC/X/01/5, Report of Activities of WECAFC *ad hoc* Working Groups.
  - WECAFC *ad hoc* Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf;
  - WECAFC *ad hoc* Working Group on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster, *Panulirus argus*; and
  - WECAFC *ad hoc* Flying Fish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean.

A new Lesser Antilles Working Group on Sustainable Development of Moored FAD Fisheries was formed with IFREMER (Martinique) taking the lead role. The first meeting of this group was held in Martinique, 15-18 October 2001.

6. A circular state letter was sent to all member countries informing them of the main outcome of the Ninth Session of the Commission. The letter stressed that the work of the Commission depended on the active participation of its members and requested them to reaffirm their desire to be considered as members of the Commission. Of the thirty-one members of the Commission, nineteen responded positively. No negative responses were received.
7. The Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) was established and had its first meeting in Trinidad & Tobago from 2-5 April 2001. SAG is composed of experts from Barbados, Cuba, France, Mexico, Trinidad & Tobago and USA. Please refer to document WECAFC/X/01/7, Report of the First Session of the Scientific Advisory Group.

## **B. LIST OF ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS IN THE WECAFC REGION**

### **Major FAO Activities**

8. The following major activities were undertaken in the WECAFC Region with the financial support of the FAO Regular Programme:
  - National Training Course in HACCP, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 24-29 September 2001. TCDC assistance provided by Cuba.
  - Workshop on the Effects of Globalisation and Deregulation on Fisheries in the Caribbean, Castries, St. Lucia, 4-8 December 2000. Twenty participants from ten Caribbean countries attended the workshop that produces a “Caribbean fisheries Agenda on Globalisation”. The report of the workshop was published as FAO Fisheries Report No. R 640.
  - Regional Workshop on Management and Allocation of fishery resources to small-scale fishers in Latin America and the Caribbean, Valparaiso, Chile, 25-28 April 2000. Forty-four experts from twelve countries of the Region attended the meeting.

### **List of FAO Fisheries Projects**

#### National

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|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Antigua/ Barbuda</b> | “Strengthening of Food Control and Safety of Fish for Export from Antigua and Barbuda” (TCP/ANT/0066). September 2000 – August 2001. US\$179,000. |
| <b>Barbados</b>         | “Assistance in High Seas Fishing Legislation” (TCP/BAR/0167). May 2001- July 2001. US\$26,500.  |
| <b>Belize</b>           | “Enhancement of sustainable small farming food production in Belize” (TCP/BZE/8922). August 1999 – September 2000. US\$208,000.                   |
| <b>Brazil</b>           | “Small-scale Seaweed Farming in Northeast Brazil” (TCP/BRA/0065). March 2001- May 2002. US\$361,000.  |

- Dominica** “Emergency Assistance to Farmers and Fishermen Affected by Hurricane “Lenny” (TCP/DMI/0065) July 2000 – June 2001 (project not yet completed). US\$94,000.
- Guyana** Design and Construction of a Freshwater Aquaculture Demonstration Farm and Training Centre (TCP/GUY/8922). 1999-2000. US\$99,000.
- Haiti** “Définition d’une politique et élaboration d’un plan d’action pour la pêche et l’aquaculture (Phase II) TCP/HAI/8923. January 2000 – January 2001. US\$48,000.
- Saint Lucia** “Assistance in Fisheries Legislation” (TCP/STL/0165). March 2001- May 2001. US\$15,000.
- Mexico** “Acuacultivos experimentales de camarón (*Penaeus duorarum*) y corvina roja (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) en el Estado de Campeche (UTF/MEX/049/MEX). April 2001-March 2002 [Project activities are just starting. Revision to be done extending project up to July or August 2002]. US\$143,202.

### Regional

Development of Standards for the Construction and Survey of Small Fishing Vessels - TCP/RLA/0069. OECS countries. October 2000 – October 2001. US\$395,000.

Preparation for an Expansion of the Domestic Fisheries for Large Pelagic Species - TCP/RLA/0070. CARICOM countries. January 2001 – March 2002. US\$328,000.

Asistencia para el Manejo Sanitario del Cultivo de Camarón en América Latina - TCP/RLA/0071. January 2001 – 31 December 2002. US\$371,000.

Emergency Assistance for the Formulation of National Hurricane Disaster Preparedness and Impact Mitigation Plans for the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Sectors -TCP/RLA/8932 – Phase II. October 1999 – February 2000. US\$102,000.

Reduction of the impact of tropical shrimp fisheries through the reduction of by-catch reduction technologies and change of Management – GEF/UNEP/FAO Project, UN/58/2 - a global project. Eleven countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean (Cuba, Costa Rica, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela) are participating.

### EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

- Dominica** “Emergency Assistance to Farmers and Fishermen Affected by Hurricane “Lenny” (TCP/DMI/0065) July 2000 – June 2001 (project not completed). US\$94,000.
- St. Kitts/Nevis** “Emergency assistance to farmers affected by Hurricane “Georges” (TCP/STK/8923). January 1999 – December 1999. US\$147,000.

### **C. PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES**

9. Based on the format suggested by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) at its Twenty-third Session, governments were requested to report on the activities taken to implement the provisions of the Code. A similar request was sent to international organizations and regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs). Reports were

received from 103 member countries and the European Community, four inter-governmental organizations, 14 RFMOs and 4 non-governmental organizations. Drawing on these reports a document “Progress in the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Related International Plans of Action”, COFI/2001/3 was prepared for the Twenty-fourth Session of COFI, 26 February – 2 March 2001. This document is a synthesis of COFI document COFI/2001/3 with a bias towards the WECAFC member countries.

### **Activities undertaken by FAO**

10. The Code remains the overarching tool and reference point for the activities of the Fisheries Department. FAO has continued to promote the Code through its regular programme activities and field projects. In addition to the preparation and dissemination of technical guidelines to support the implementation of the Code, it was included in the agenda of regional and national fisheries meetings.

### **Application at National Level**

11. Of the 103 Member Countries and European Community that replied to the questionnaire, 21 were from Latin America and the Caribbean and 20 are WECAFC members.<sup>1</sup>
12. Many countries are focusing on selected key areas without losing the overall holistic perspective of the Code and several countries stressed the need for an integral and comprehensive approach in addressing capture fisheries and aquaculture issues. Several countries also indicated that the objectives of the Code are extremely relevant to the management and development of their fisheries sector. The greatest relevance is attributed to the Code as an instrument to establish principles and criteria to implement policies for the conservation of fisheries resources and fishery management and development, to promote the contribution of fisheries to food security and food quality, giving priority to the nutritional needs of local communities, and to establish principles for responsible fishing and fisheries activities considering all their relevant biological, technical, economical, social, environmental and commercial aspects. The priority rating for specific objectives of the Code are shown in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Barbados, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Lucia, Republic of Korea, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and USA.

**TABLE 1** Priority rating by Member countries for specific objectives of the Code

<i>(a) OBJECTIVES</i>		RATING					
		1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
1	Establish principles for responsible fishing and fisheries activities considering all their relevant biological, technical, economic, social, environmental and commercial aspects	3	6	17	21	53	100
2	Establish principles and criteria to implement policies for the conservation of fishery resources and fisheries management and development	2	1	7	28	62	100
3	Serve as an instrument of reference to improve legal and institutional framework for appropriate management measures	2	4	30	35	28	99
4	Provide guidance to formulate and implement international agreements and other legal instruments	10	15	24	26	20	95
5	Facilitate and promote cooperation in the conservation of fishery resources, fisheries management and development	2	4	8	38	44	96
6	Promote the contribution of fisheries to food security and food quality giving priority to the nutritional needs of local communities	2	2	10	23	62	99
7	Promote protection of living aquatic resources and their environments and coastal areas	0	1	18	36	43	98
8	Promote the trade in fish and fishery products in conformity with relevant international rules	0	2	33	43	22	100
9	Promote research on fisheries as well as on associated ecosystems and relevant environmental factors	0	2	10	45	40	97
10	Provide standards of conduct for all involved in the fisheries sector	0	0	25	42	31	98

1= not very relevant      3= relevant      5= extremely relevant

13. Generally, countries assigned the greatest priority to fisheries management, aquaculture development, post-harvest practices and fisheries research. Table 2 indicates the level of priority that countries attach to the substantive themes developed in the Code and in the relevant FAO Technical Guidelines for responsible fisheries.

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**TABLE 2**      **Prioritization of themes in the Code by member countries**

	<b>Top Priority</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Low Priority</b>
Fisheries Management	72	20	8
Fishing Operations	35	54	10
Aquaculture Development	52	31	14
Integration of Fisheries into Coastal and Basin Area Management	29	51	17
Post-harvest Practices	46	44	9
Trade	26	62	10
Fisheries Research	45	47	7
Inland Fisheries Development	34	41	24

### **Fisheries Management**

14. Fishery management systems are not well developed in several countries and in particular developing countries. Several countries have developed management plans for marine fisheries<sup>2</sup> and for inland fisheries<sup>3</sup>. In many cases where fisheries management plans have been developed, they do not cover all fisheries.

### **Fishing Operations**

15. Over 90 percent of the responding countries, stated that fishing licensing is in place to ensure that fishing is carried out in an orderly way within waters under their jurisdiction. However, the fishing licence in most cases is simply a registration mechanism as no specific management conditions (for example the provision of information on catch data and fishing effort) are attached to the provision of a licence.
16. Some WECAFC member countries<sup>4</sup> reported on steps they had taken to ensure that the fishing activities of vessels flying their flags in international waters or the waters under the jurisdiction of another state are reported, monitored and carried out in a responsible manner.
17. A number of countries<sup>5</sup> have taken measures, to minimize catch at non-target species. These measures include the use of turtle excluding devices, mesh size limitations, confiscation of catches, ban on the landings of juveniles and/or discards, levies on by-catch, season/area closures of fishing grounds to limit by-catch (juveniles, non-target species, non-fish species) and discards. In some countries the permitted levels of by-catch and/or discards have been developed in consultation with the industry<sup>6</sup>.

### **Aquaculture development**

18. Some countries indicated that legal and institutional frameworks for the development of aquaculture are in place<sup>7</sup>. Guidelines for best practices have or are being developed in a few countries both by governments and

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<sup>2</sup> Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Guatemala, Guinea, Jamaica, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA.

<sup>3</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama, Republic of Korea and USA.

<sup>4</sup> Costa Rica, Cuba, Guinea and Japan.

<sup>5</sup> Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guinea, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA.

<sup>6</sup> Costa Rica, Cuba.

<sup>7</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Republic of Korea, USA.

producers<sup>8</sup>. A limited number of countries have introduced measures on environmental impact assessment and together with the risk management approach and the precautionary principle, are applied with regard to (in particular) the introduction of non-native species, the use of genetically-altered stocks and the development of large size enterprises especially for shrimps<sup>9</sup>.

19. Many countries reported on measures to promote responsible aquaculture in support of rural communities, producer organizations and fish farmers<sup>10</sup>. The measures include: providing extension and training services to fish farmers, conducting research and surveys, development of separate code of practice for responsible aquaculture business, increased funding for environmental and biological scientific research, creation of special funds for aquaculture development, integration of aquaculture into existing farming practices, organization of fish farmers' associations, strict control of the introduction of exotic species.

### **Integration of fisheries into coastal area management**

20. The legal framework for the integration of fisheries into coastal area management exists in many developed countries, but most developing countries do not yet have a specific legal framework for this activity<sup>11</sup>.
21. Conflicts are a common phenomenon in all countries. The conflicts between coastal and industrial fisheries as well as between gear types operating in the coastal area seem to be widespread and serve. The other types of conflicts seem to be less widespread and are location-specific. The degree/importance of conflicts in the fishing sector and between the fishery sector and other activities is provided in Table 3. Most countries have in place the mechanisms to resolve these conflicts although such mechanisms have not been translated into legislation in the majority of countries.

**TABLE 3 Importance of conflicts in the fishing sector and between the fishery sector and other activities**

	<b>STRONG</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>LIGHT</b>	<b>NONE</b>
Conflict between coastal fisheries and industrial fisheries	46	22	12	20
Conflict between coastal fisheries and coastal aquaculture	6	10	10	21
Conflict between gear types operating in the coastal area	23	32	40	-
Conflict between fisheries and recreational development	9	12	23	15
Conflict between fisheries and port development	5	13	19	21
Conflict between fisheries and mineral extraction activities	7	14	11	19

### **Post-harvest practices and trade**

<sup>8</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Japan, Republic of Korea, USA.

<sup>9</sup> Barbados, Brazil, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Japan, Nicaragua, Republic of Korea, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA.

<sup>10</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Republic of Korea, USA.

<sup>11</sup> The following developing countries reported that they have legal framework for ICAM: Barbados, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia.

22. Many countries<sup>12</sup> reported that an effective food safety and quality-assurance system was in place or was being developed. Measures that have been taken to reduce post-harvest losses and wastes include: implementation of HACCP concepts from harvesting through retail sale, improved use of by-catch, training and demonstration on product development (such as salting, drying, smoking), construction of handling facilities and laboratories for quality assurance, introduction of cost-effective processing devices/techniques, including insulated containers/boxes, and improved chilling and boxing at sea.
23. A number of countries<sup>13</sup> have legislation, including other measures such as compliance, education and awareness raising programmes, or “foot print” or traceability certification to ensure illegally harvested fisheries resources are not processed or traded. However, the majority of responding countries indicated that there are currently no particular measures (with the exception of education and awareness raising of the issue) to overcome the processing or trade of illegally harvested resources.

### **Fisheries research**

24. Many countries<sup>14</sup> reported that reliable estimates were available on the status of stocks, under their jurisdiction, on the average 40 percent of the stocks. It was also reported that complete and reliable statistics of catches and fishing effort are being collected although in many cases lack of sufficient qualified personnel to process, analyse and interpret the data is a major problem.
25. The main constraints in obtaining data for fisheries management are seen as: too few trained stock assessment scientists and too little coverage by observer programmes, a lack of nation-wide environmental monitoring programmes (this limits the capability to make forecasts), inadequate links between catch against quotas, limited technical, financial and logistical support, inadequate or ineffective statistical programmes and environmental monitoring. The marine environment is said to be routinely monitored in some countries<sup>15</sup>, while many countries regularly monitor the extent of by-catch and discards principally through on-board observers, remote sensing, and census of seals, birds, etc.

### **Constraints and suggested solutions**

26. Countries identified inadequate institutional and technical capacity, inadequate funding, lack of information and inadequate access to information, including public education programmes, under-utilization of the media, as well as inadequate participation of all stakeholders, inappropriate legislative framework, the socio-economic implications of reducing fishing effort and the difficulties of implementing such concepts as the precautionary approach in the context of reduced human and financial resources in developing countries, as major preoccupations and the principal constraints in most developing countries.
27. The suggested solutions included the need for more educational outreach, the active involvement of stakeholders through the adoption of participatory approaches in fisheries management, presentation of the Code at major national/international fishing and aquaculture industry events, emphasis on training and capacity building at all levels, improvement in the legislative framework by incorporating provisions of the Code, the translation of the Code in local languages, and the increased use of audiovisual aids.

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<sup>12</sup> Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Jamaica, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Republic of Korea, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA.

<sup>13</sup> Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Grenada, Japan, Republic of Korea, USA.

<sup>14</sup> Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica, Japan, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and USA.

<sup>15</sup> Brazil, Cuba, France, Japan, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA.

## **SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

28. The Commission is invited to (a) take note of the inter-sessional activities and follow-up actions undertaken; and (b) discuss the experiences at national and regional levels in the implementation of the Code. In particular, the Commission may wish to provide suggestions and guidance to enhance the implementation of the Code in member countries.