



FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI)

Main outcomes of the February
2005 meeting

What is COFI?

- ✚ The global intergovernmental body with competence on all fishery matters;
- ✚ Open to 141 member governments and non-members;
- ✚ Attended by Representatives of the UN, UN bodies and specialized agencies, Inter-governmental institutions including regional fishery bodies, international non-governmental organizations participate without right to vote;
- ✚ 2 sub-committees on Fish Trade and on Aquaculture;
- ✚ Occasionally reinforced by Ministerial Sessions.

What does it do?

- ✚ Meets every two years to, *inter alia*:
 - ✚ Monitor the world fisheries situation;
 - ✚ Discuss recurrent and emerging international issues and solutions referred to it by its members, or the UNGA and related mechanisms;
 - ✚ Agree on binding and voluntary agreements negotiations;
 - ✚ Examine and evaluate FAO work on fisheries
 - ✚ Agree on FAO program of work and budget
- ✚ Is an opportunity to foster cooperation between regional fisheries bodies;
- ✚ Offers an inter-governmental platform to INGOs, other IGOs and industry representatives to dialogue with governmental authorities in charge of fisheries.

COFI 26

- ✚ Met on 7-11 March 2005, in Rome;
- ✚ Growing attendance. Attended by 748 registered participants, 137 countries, 7 specialized agencies of the UN, 28 IGOs (including regional fishery management organizations) and 25 INGOS;
- ✚ Chaired in their personal capacity by Mr. Glenn Hurry, from Australia and Mr. Kapila Pereira from Sri Lanka (vice-chair);
- ✚ Followed by a special Ministerial Session focusing on the tsunami and illegal fishing.

Ministerial session: Tsunami

Ministers called *inter alia* for:

- A responsible and people-centered reconstruction strategy;
- Donor coordination;
- Focus on sustainable livelihoods, environmental protection, sectoral efficiency, improved sustainability and governance;
- Protection of fishing rights, particularly in subsistence fishing;
- Responsible aquaculture rehabilitation;
- Coordinated assessment of impact on and status of fishery resources;
- Rebuilding local management capacity;
- FAO lead role in policy assistance and coordination.

Ministerial session: IUU

Ministered agreed *inter alia* to:

- Renew efforts and cooperation to combat IUU;
- Revise legislations and increase deterrence;
- Implement catch certification schemes;
- Adopt internationally agreed market-related measures;
- Require that all high seas vessels be equipped with VMS;
- Eliminate economic incentives leading to IUU;
- Develop and implement vessel boarding and inspection schemes;
- Strengthen Port States measures;
- Pursue the “flags of convenience” and genuine link” debate;
- Strengthen RFMOs;
- Exercise full control on vessels flying their flag;
- Collect and submit to FAO and relevant RFMOs the data on vessels authorized to fish in the high seas;

COFI 26 Agenda

1. Progress on implementation of the CCRF
2. Assistance to countries affected by the Tsunami;
3. Report on COFI-Trade, CITES and ecolabelling;
4. Report on COFI-Aquaculture;
5. Enabling small-scale fisheries;
6. Deep sea fisheries issues;
7. Sea turtles conservation and fisheries;
8. Marine Protected Areas;
9. Review of the FAO Programme of Work.

Implementation of the CCRF

COFI called for:

- A stronger focus on implementation
- Rigorous implementation of the IPOA-Capacity and IPOA-sharks
- Strengthening of Port State measures against IUU
- Development of an FAO database of Port State measures.
- Continued FAO work on subsidies, management policies, bioeconomic modeling, RFMO's efficiency, status and trends of fisheries, deep sea resources, aquaculture development and the post-tsunami reconstruction.

COFI Sub-Committee on Trade

COFI *inter alia*:

Adopted International Guidelines for ecolabelling for marine capture fisheries;

- Recommended the preparation of International Guidelines for ecolabelling for inland capture fisheries;
- Noted the successful first meeting of the FAO *ad hoc* Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of Proposals to Amend Appendices I and II of Cites Concerning Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species (July 2004);
- Asked for further collaboration with CITES including towards the signature of an MOU;

COFI Sub Committee on aquaculture

COFI, *inter alia*:

- Acknowledged the role of the sub-sector for the economy, livelihoods and food security;
- Called for an increase of the FAO resources for that sub-sector;
- Gave priority to small-holder, commercial aquaculture, and regional networking;
- Requested FAO to work on codes of good practices and legislation, risk assessment, integrated development planning, feed strategies, food safety, sustainable stocking and fattening schemes, transboundary movements;
- Stressed the need for financial assistance in developing countries;
- Asked FAO to develop a “Vision Paper” on the future of aquaculture;

Enabling small-scale fisheries

COFI, following the recommendations of the FAO Advisory Committee on Fishery Research (ACFR):

- Recognized their importance for many countries and SIDSs and identified the key issues affecting these fisheries;;
- Appreciated the FAO Guidelines on Enhancing the Contribution of SSFs to poverty alleviation and food security;
- Appreciated the impact of the UK-funded Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme (SFLP) and called for more work in that direction;
- Stressed the need for assistance;

Deep sea Fisheries

COFI :

- Noted the challenges posed by the management of deep sea demersal fisheries;
- Welcomed the DEEPSEA 2003 Conference organized by Australia and New Zealand with the collaboration of FAO;
- Discussed the deficiencies in the present legal framework calling for improvement;
- Requested members to submit catch detailed information to FAO;
- Called on RFMOs meeting immediately after to consider the issue
- Requested FAO to provide UNGA with information, technical advice and leadership

Sea turtles and fisheries


COFI recommended *inter alia*:


- To develop technical guidelines on how to reduce turtle mortality;
- To use gear (such as circle hook) reducing turtle mortality;
- To coordinate research, promote information exchange;
- To review progress and report (website);
- To broaden RFMOs' mandate to reduce fishing impacts;
- To better link environmental and fisheries agencies;
- To facilitate regional harmonization of legislation and management;
- To look for extra-budgetary resources for the above.

Marine Protected Areas

 COFI:

 Positively discussed the issue;

 Recommended the elaboration of technical guidelines on the design, implementation and testing of MPAs;

 Agreed that FAO should assist members in meeting the 2012 WSSD goals in collaboration with other relevant IGOS.

Other matters

COFI:

- Noted with concern the proliferation of international forums addressing fisheries matters, sometimes without sufficient mandate or information;
- Stressed the need to enhance coordination and avoid duplication.



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Thanks for *your* attention