

Panelist Abstract

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Name of Session: Session V. Global Water-Related Initiatives - A Briefing Plenary

Presentation Title: The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)

Summary of Key Issues and Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Initiated in 1991 by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), developed in a multi-stakeholder consultation process, and adopted in 1995 by the over 170 Member Governments of the FAO Conference, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries represents the most significant globally recognized international framework in the realm of the world's marine, coastal and inland fisheries, including aquaculture. Based on major international agreements (UNCLOS, UNCED, CBD), the Code sets out principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity. The Articles of the Code cover all major issues and practices in fisheries, including fisheries management, fishing operations, aquaculture development, integration of fisheries into coastal area management, post-harvest practices, trade, and fisheries research, general principles, and provisions related to its implementation, monitoring, updating, and special requirements of developing countries.

The FAO Fisheries Department (FAO/FI) is promoting the implementation of the CCRF through numerous regular programme and field project activities. In addition to dissemination of technical guideline documentation in support of implementation, and discussion in regional fisheries organizations, several major follow-up initiatives have been facilitated by FAO, in cooperation with partners:

1. Technical Consultation on Policies for Sustainable Shrimp Culture (1997)
2. Technical Consultation on the Feasibility of Developing Non-discriminatory Technical Guidelines for Eco-labelling of Products from Marine Capture Fisheries (1998)
3. Technical Consultation on Sustainability Indicators in Marine Capture Fisheries (1999)
4. International Conference on Integrated Fisheries Monitoring (1999)
5. Ministerial Meeting on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1999)
6. Consultation on the Application of Article 9 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the Mediterranean Region (1999)
7. Use of Property Rights in Fisheries Management (1999)
8. Three International Plans of Action (1999) aiming at Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries; Conservation and Management of Sharks; and Management of Fishing Capacity.
9. The Bangkok Declaration and Strategy for Aquaculture Development (2000)
10. Technical Consultation on the Suitability of the CITES Criteria for Listing Commercially-Exploited Aquatic Species (2000)
11. Technical Consultations on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (2000)

Progress in implementing the CCRF, at national, regional and global levels, is monitored and regularly discussed at COFI. Training and capacity-building in fisheries management are major priorities for developing countries, where lack of technical assistance and additional financial resources is a major critical constraint to the effective application of the Code. A wide range of project activities are being carried out in support of the implementation of the CCRF. Different aspects of the CCRF are being addressed by several major donor supported projects including, for example:

- Inter-regional Programme for the Assistance to Developing Countries for the Implementation of the CCRF, components on Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Scientific Advice for Fisheries Management (\$ 2 million; Norway)
- Research & Fisheries Management in Lake Tanganyika (\$ 10 million; Finland)
- Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme; 25 countries of Western Africa participating (\$ 34 million; UK)
- International Conservation & Management of Fishery Resources (\$ 2.5 million; Japan)
- Scientific Cooperation to support Responsible Fisheries in the Adriatic (\$ 3 million; Italy)
- Reduction of environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling (\$ 8.7 million; GEF/FAO/UNEP/Govts & priv.sector)
- Sustainable Management of Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (\$ 1.1 million GEF/SIDA/NOAA/FAO/Govts)
- Sustainable Management of Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (\$ 480,000 GEF/UNEP/FAO/Govts/CSRP)

Implementation of all CCRF provisions is far from complete. Many fisheries and aquatic environments continue to suffer from inadequate management, significantly affecting resources and benefits. In addition to a Medium Term Strategy in support of the implementation of the CCRF, FAO/FI has developed several project modules under the Inter-regional Programme for the Assistance to Developing Countries for the Implementation of the CCRF. Their scope include: Implementation of the Compliance Agreement; Reporting of Fisheries Statistics; Fishing Operations; Marine Resource Survey Capabilities; Fishery Policy, Planning and Management; Fishing Fleet Restructuring Policies; Post-Harvest Practices and Trade; Support to NGOs.

Strong emphasis is given by FAO/FI to further strengthening international cooperation and role of Regional Fishery Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (including private sector, environmental and social interests), and other stakeholders concerned with fisheries and aquatic environments. FAO/FI and the FAO Legal Office also review and promote the development and implementation of international instruments/agreements related to fisheries and international water bodies, in close cooperation with FAO and non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies.

In many countries, the application of the CCRF is highly dependent on availability and access to technical and policy information, on both fisheries and environmental matters. FAO/FI actively promotes the UN Atlas of the Oceans, Onefish and other knowledge & information systems, supports the IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), as well as CBD activities as related to aquatic biodiversity and aquatic genetic resources.

In adopting the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in 1995, the FAO Conference called on States, International Organizations, whether Governmental or Non-Governmental, and all those involved in fisheries to collaborate in the fulfilment and implementation of the objectives and principles contained in this Code. The FAO Fisheries Department welcomes cooperation in promoting the effective implementation of the CCRF.

<http://www.fao.org/fi>

<http://www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/codecon.asp>

<http://www.fao.org/fi/meetings/cofi/cofi23/cofi23.asp>

<http://www.fao.org/fi/projects/projects.asp>

A video "**Connecting the Lines - The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries**" is also available.