



Food and Agriculture
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United Nations



REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK



PAGE 6 RSN AND RFB'S ROLE NOTED AT UNGA



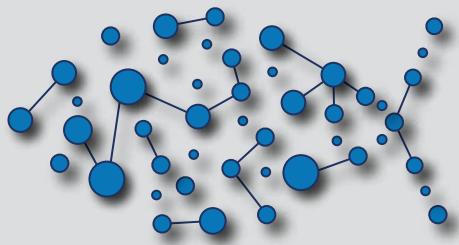
PAGE 16 FIGHTING IUU FISHING



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A WORD FROM THE EDITORS

The Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network is a unique coordination mechanism bringing together key actors engaged in fisheries and aquaculture governance around the world. From the First meeting of FAO and Non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies and Arrangements held in February 1999, to the 2005 meeting, when participants agreed in naming this as 'the RFB Secretariats' Network', the RSN has been counted with the efforts of all its members to meet consecutively each two years - in coincidence with sessions of the Committee on Fisheries - and with the support of FAO, in particular the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

At the Sixth RSN meeting (RSN-6), in 2016, members discussed how to better communicate and provide visibility to the work of RFBs and RFMOs, in that occasion the Secretariat was pro-active in proposing options to strengthening

the role of the Network and facilitate a space and tools to all organizations for sharing experiences.

Following this meeting, and with the support of its members as well as the FAO RFBs Task Force, and ensuing the COFI-32 outcomes, the RSN Secretariat is implementing actions to enhance cooperation and communication among its members, and in view to expand its influence on other key actors and stakeholders, to achieve together the SDG 14. One of the initiatives in course is the renewal of this RSN Newsletter.

The newsletter is a channel to share, in an equal approach and on a voluntary basis, activities and interests of RFBs and RFMOs. FAO recognizes the key role of RFBs/RFMOs in promoting and implementing measures for long-term sustainable

fisheries and supports active and substantial participation by states in RFBs/RFMOs decision-making mechanisms. Other UN agencies and international organizations are currently considering at a strategic level the role of these organizations in implementing policies on fisheries governance, environment, economic and trade, among others.

Some members of RFBs/RFMOs lack the capacity to fully participate and engage actively in RFBs/RFMOs processes; many are unable to contribute financially to the RFBs or RFMOs budgets, or suffer from the lack of technical and institutional capacity; these bodies experience an absence of ownership among their members with impact in the management of fisheries and aquaculture resources. However, the RFBs/RFMOs community is willing to continue working, redoubling efforts and collaborating with all key actors for sustainable

fisheries and aquaculture development. The RSN Secretariat is pleased to support this process and provide a forum for information exchange and discussion on emerging issues.



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¹ Report of the RSN-6:
<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rsn/en>

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LATEST NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights



THE RSN

Intersessional Meeting was held in Oslo

In the margins of the First Meeting of the Parties to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) held from 29-31 May 2017 in Oslo, Norway, the RFMOs invited met at the RSN intersessional meeting on Sunday 28 May, to discuss their role in supporting the implementation of the PSMA.

Six RFMOs (ICCAT, FFA, NAFO, NEAFC, RECOFI, and SEAFO) attended the informal RSN inter-session meeting, the Chair, Mr Driss Meski, and the Secretary, Mr Piero Mannini, briefed the participants on RSN activities undertaken since the sixth meeting of the RSN (9 and 15 July 2016) and the 32nd session of COFI (11 to 15 July 2016).

In particular the meeting noted that, following the outcome of RSN-6, the Secretariat has endeavored for RSN to continue to provide a neutral forum for discussion and sharing knowledge and experiences; strengthen FAO/RSN collaboration framework; enhance cooperation; facilitate participation in global processes; create tools for facilitating cooperation.

Additionally, the briefing highlighted that particular attention has been paid to increase communication and visibility, and the website innovation including the execution of three surveys addressing a large group of respondents from RFB secretariats to COFI member countries and CSOs and NGOs and target audience. The



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RSN newsletter has been regularly produced and disseminated.

The meeting discussed some of outcomes of COFI 32 that have particular implications for RFBs and RFMOs, such as the awareness and visibility of the achievements of RFBs, while recognizing that challenges remain; acknowledgement of the cooperation between RFMOs/RFBs and the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAP); emphasis on the fundamental role of RFMOs in

fisheries management and encouraged FAO to continue to collaborate with them, including on trade-related matters; the appreciation of the role of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN); the establishment of new RFMOs/RFBs, such as the SIOFA and the NPFC; the reiterated calls for support to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, the Caspian Sea and the CECAF and the WECAFC regions; and the emphasis of the importance of regular and transparent performance reviews of RFMOs/RFBs and

implementation of their relevant recommendations in a timely and effective manner.

The issue of the current modus operandi of RSN was discussed, including the formulation of the agenda of the bi-annual session as it can be difficult to include topics of general interest to all RSN members considering the diversity of mandates, structures and institutional set up.

In anticipation of the outcome of the PSMA inception meeting, the

meeting concurred on the need and opportunity to facilitate the implementation of the PSMA through RFMOs, noting that cooperation between RFMOs in this regards would be opportune, given that a number of RFMOs already have conservation and management measures in place focusing on port State measures (PSMs) that are in line with the PSMA.

The meeting elaborated a statement to be delivered at the PSMA inception meeting by Mr Driss Meski in his capacity of Chair of RSN.

The role of RFMOs in implementing Port State Measures

MR CHAIR,
LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN

First of all, allow me to express my appreciation to FAO for inviting ICCAT to participate to this first meeting on the implementation of the Port State Measures. I also would like to thank the Kingdom of Norway for the arrangements of this event in this beautiful city of Oslo.



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STATEMENT OF DRISS MESKI, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ICCAT AS CHAIR OF THE REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK AT THE PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT CONFERENCE

OSLO, NORWAY
29–31 MAY 2017

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I am making this contribution to this discussion as Chair of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) and should not be considered a spokesperson for the individual RFMOs or their Contracting Parties.

The FAO Port State Measures Agreement entered into force in June 2016, one year ago. The ratification and application of this measure is a matter for each individual State, but there is potential for regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) to play a significant role in coordinating its application. The Agreement itself stipulates that Parties should cooperate at sub-regional, regional and global levels. At regional level, several RFMOs have adopted various requirements and minimum standards of the FAO Agreement.

In some cases, Port State Measures can be an important tool in the fight against IUU, the fight against which is a major task of any RFMO. Although some battles have been won, the fight continues, as long as incentives to engage in IUU activities remain.

Denial of use of ports is imperative if access to markets of IUU fish is to be restricted. While much progress can be made on the trading of fish through catch documentation systems, such systems are limited unless full cooperation of non-members of RFMOs can be guaranteed. The same could be said of port state measures taken by RFMOs, but the advantage of the FAO Agreement is that it allows States which are not members of RFMOs to implement the agreement and provides a framework for coordinated efforts across all RFMOs, regardless of area or

“ ... Port State Measures ... an important tool in the fight against IUU fishing, the fight against which is a major task of any RFMO”



target species, the combined membership of which will be significant.

It has been recognised that much remains to be done regarding the full implementation both of the Agreement itself and of the measures adopted by the RFMOs arising from it. Failure to strengthen port controls whether through the FAO Agreement, RFMO measures or National Programs, could stem from two main sources, lack of political will and lack of resources, both human and financial. Considerable discussion has taken place recently regarding the lack of resources. Efforts in this regard need to be properly coordinated by all those providing such funding, but consideration of long term issues need to be addressed. Providing training manuals, training courses and equipment for inspectors may go some way to assisting

in implantation, but will not mitigate the financial burden of inspector salaries and other long-term costs.

We welcome the work that FAO has undertaken on training workshops for the implementation of the PSMA. We welcome the continued work of FAO in this regard, and encourage them to strengthen to the extent possible their cooperation with the relevant RFMOs in organising the future training workshops. We have already seen that RFMO involvement in these workshops is useful, both as a contribution to the workshop and also to strengthen the capacity of the RFMO themselves.

In addition, more information is required regarding the ports to which the measures apply. For those Parties which have ratified the FAO Agreement, the measures

will be relevant to all ports in their jurisdiction. However, for RFMOs, the measures are limited to their geographic areas and species of competence.

The information received by any one RFMO therefore will be limited to its own sphere. The nature of RFMOs make decision making and adoption processes fairly slow, as certain procedures need to be followed in order to allow inclusiveness and transparency, and to take account of the various governmental procedures of the member States.

Although certain information can be made public, and other information can be shared, such as lists of authorised ports and contact points, and eventual listing of IUU vessels, some more immediate information arising from port inspection may be of a sensitive nature, and will need a clear framework and protocols in

order for it to be shared beyond the boundaries of the individual RFMOs.

For this reason, I believe a concerted effort of information sharing among RFMOs is vital to the overall and long-term success of the Agreement and I should like to take this opportunity to encourage all of us to work together to find ways to share technical resources and information as far as possible.

Lastly, I would like to stress the instrumental role that the FAO-supported Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) can play to promote regional cooperation for fisheries governance, and in particular to facilitate the implementation of PSMA at both regional and global scale.

Latest news



RSN AND RFB'S ROLE NOTED

at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly side event on ‘Securing a Future for the Oceans: Leveraging Sustainable Fisheries and the Conservation of Marine Resources’

Maldives hosted a high-level side-event on “Securing a Future for the Oceans: Leveraging Sustainable Fisheries and the Conservation of Marine Resources”. The event highlighted the possibility of sustainable fisheries practices in harmony with conservation of marine resources, and to generate policy relevant recommendations in realizing the Ocean Conference’s Call for Action and voluntary commitments. The event brought together like-minded coastal countries and other partners transitioning to more sustainable fishing methods, with the aim of sharing experiences and best practices as well as the challenges and capacity constraints faced in implementation of the targets of SDG 14.

In its presentation, Mr Lucas Tavares, Senior Liaison Officer of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), noted the importance of oceans and seas that provides half the world's oxygen, sequester carbon and are home to the greater part of global biodiversity, and the Fisheries and aquaculture in supporting the livelihoods of about 10 percent of the world's population, and providing over 3 billion people with 20 percent of their daily animal protein intake.

He emphasized that FAO believes that leveraging sustainable fisheries and conserving marine resources are essential for securing a healthy future for oceans and that Regional fisheries management organization (RFMOs) play a central role in this effort as a primary mechanism for fishing nations to cooperate in the effective management of high seas fisheries.

‘For example, States and RFMOs implement around 20 international instruments and 8 regional conventions

that address deep sea fishing and biodiversity conservation in areas beyond national jurisdiction’, he mentioned in his statement.

Mr Tavares referred to the importance of performance reviews for strengthening RFMOs to improve management of fish stocks and noted the FAO collaboration by providing technical support and forums for discussion and knowledge sharing; assisting in the implementation of international instruments such as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Port States Measures Agreement against IUU Fishing, International Plans of Action, Technical Guidelines and others; hosting the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network Secretariat to better coordinate work with key



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actors and partners; and, promoting the Blue Growth Initiative for sustainable and integrated socioeconomic management of fisheries and aquaculture, to reach SDG14.

He reaffirmed that Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing remains one of the greatest threats to the sustainable management of fisheries resources and to

the conservation of marine biodiversity and ecosystems, and expressed the invitation of FAO to implement the agreement. Finally, he mentioned the 'FAO's commitment to work with Member States, RFMOs and other partners to ensure healthy oceans, the sustainable use of marine resources, and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, starting with ending poverty and hunger'.



UPDATES ON DEVELOPMENTS

in the [General Assembly](#) and in the work of the [Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea](#) relevant to the work of regional fishery bodies

In December 2017, the General Assembly adopted three resolutions relevant to the work of regional fishery bodies. They are:

- 01** Resolution 72/72 on Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 • Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments (Provisionally available as document A/72/L.12);
- 02** Resolution 72/73 on oceans and the law of the sea (Document A/Res/72/73); • and
- 03** Resolution 72/249 entitled "International legally binding instrument under the • United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction" (Provisionally available as document A/72/L.7).

Some of the developments in resolution 72/72 on sustainable fisheries of particular importance to RFBs include:

- The Secretary-General was requested to convene the thirteenth round of informal consultations of States parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement for two days in May 2018 (see below). Pursuant to the recommendation of the resumed Review Conference in 2016, the informal consultation of States Parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (ICSP) will be dedicated, on an annual basis, to the consideration of specific issues arising from the implementation of the Agreement, with a view to improving understanding, sharing experiences and identifying best practices for the consideration of States parties, as well as the General Assembly and the Review Conference. Thus, it was decided that in 2018, ICSP-13 will focus on the topic "Science-policy interface", ICSP-14 in 2019 will focus on the topic "Performance reviews of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements". Although no report was requested for this meeting, invited participants were invited to submit their views on the topic "Science-policy interface" to the Division

by 30 March 2018 for posting on the website of the Division. Further information on the modalities for this meeting will be provided in due course in the invitation to participate in the meeting. The meeting will take place on 22 and 23 May 2018.

- The year beginning on 1 January 2022 was proclaimed the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture; and
- The date of 5 June was proclaimed the International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.
- Some of the developments in resolution 72/73 on Oceans and the law of the sea included:
- The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development was proclaimed for the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 2021;
- The nineteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea will be held in New York from 18-22 June 2018. It will focus its discussions on the topic "Anthropogenic underwater noise". Regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements will be invited to participate in the meeting, as per past practice.

➤ The tenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (the Regular Process) will be convened from 28 February to 1 March 2018 to approve the outline of the second world ocean assessment, and the eleventh meeting on 23 and 24 August 2018, with a view to providing recommendations to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session on the preparation of the assessment to be carried out in the second cycle and on the implementation of the second cycle. The holding of the workshops in support of the Regular Process in Lisbon in September 2017, in Auckland, New Zealand, in October 2017, in Camboriú, Brazil, in November 2017, in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2017 and in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, in December 2017 was welcomed and a number of decisions on how to proceed with the preparation of the second world ocean assessment were adopted. The second round of regional workshops will be held in 2018. A call for nominations to the Pool of Experts of the Regular Process will soon be made.

Some of the developments in resolution 72/249 entitled "International legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction" include:

- The General Assembly decided to convene an intergovernmental conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee established by resolution 69/292 on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, with a view to developing the instrument as soon as possible;
- It also decided that negotiations shall address the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, namely, the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, in particular, together and as a whole, marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits, measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments and capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.
- It further decided that initially with respect to 2018, 2019 and the first half of 2020, the conference shall meet for four sessions of a duration of 10 working days each, with the first session taking place from 4-17 September 2018, the second and third sessions taking place in 2019, and the fourth session taking place in the first half of 2020.

➤ The conference shall hold a three-day organizational meeting in New York, from 16-18 April 2018, to discuss organizational matters, including the process for the preparation of the zero draft of the instrument.

➤ The General Assembly decided to invite, as observers to the conference, representatives of interested global and regional intergovernmental organizations and other interested international bodies that were invited to participate in relevant conferences and summits.

➤ The General Assembly reaffirmed that the work and results of the conference should be fully consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

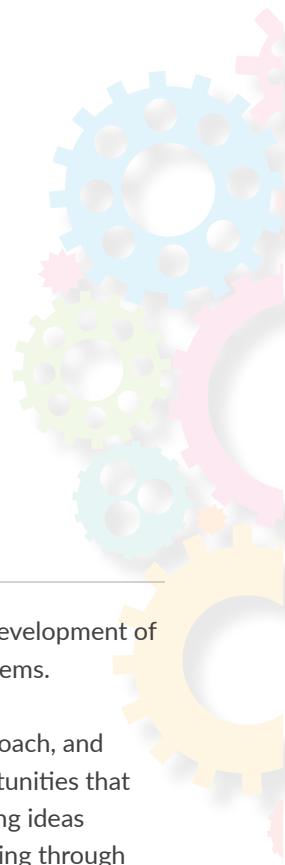
➤ It also recognized that the process and its result should not undermine existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies.

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FAO COLLABORATION

to refine species identification tools -
FishFinder 2.0 Development Platform
Your cooperation is important !

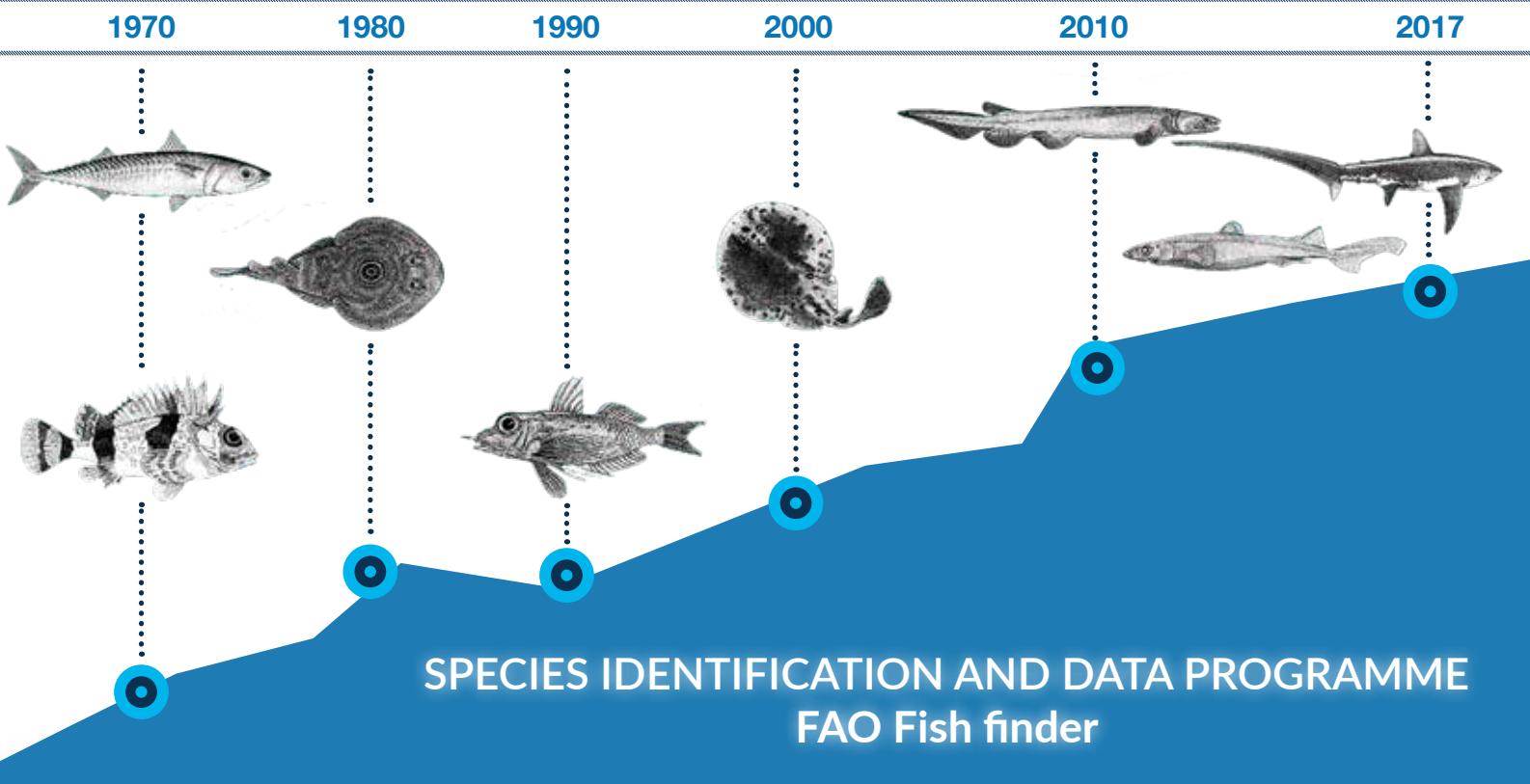


FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department services fishery needs as a global information provider of species identification materials. This service gives knowledge to fishers and assists countries document catches and landings of commercially exploited aquatic resources, as well as information on other species of interest to fisheries.

In order to assess the potential for migrating FAO's (and willing collaborators) species identification and dissemination processes from traditional methods, to one that exploits modern machine learning digital techniques, FAO is seeking to establish a collaborative workgroup ("FishFinder 2.0 Development Platform"), where interested individuals and groups (fisheries, taxonomy

and IT experts) can work together on the development of more automated species identification systems.

FAO has taken some first steps in this approach, and has been running a study to identify opportunities that such digitized systems could bring, collecting ideas and requirements from staff at FAO (including through a questionnaire to Regional fisheries Bodies), IT and systematics/taxonomic ichthyological community at large. FAO is also detailing knowledge on the current status of machine learning and other related IT technologies that could help us progress the above objectives, the capabilities of which would form part of any future digitized system.



What would be useful?

At present, the specification for the images is as follows:

- ✓ Fish species most targeted are: sharks and rays, tuna, billfish, sea cucumbers, ornamental fish of the aquarium trade;
- ✓ Each image must have a reliable species id;
- ✓ Repeats of the same fish are possible if images are taken from different angles, although images of different fish of the same species taken from across its range is naturally preferable if we are to train the system;
- ✓ Image format: jpg images preferred (since the compression is much higher, so the size is much smaller), using pictures in excess of 50kb (normally the size ranges there from 300 kb to 1.5 mb). We will crop and resize the pictures, so they are suitable for training;
- ✓ The fish in the image is in focus and not obstructed by other articles or within / on top of other fishes.
- ✓ The image of the fish should preferably be in a natural type position (nor crumpled or bent or cut and frozen, underwater, in poor visibility conditions, etc.).

FAO has short term plans to:



- ✓ Collect images of fish from experts (we aim at some 200+ (up to 500) images per species each) for the running of a number of tests as part of a test app;
- ✓ Images would be stored in a temporarily “closed” repository (only accessible to selected data-manager and computing algorithms - individual images will not be published);
- ✓ The test app would go into production as soon as the images are collated, using images ‘sets’ provided to run many tests;
- ✓ FAO would then like to bring like-minded experts together for a meeting in 2018 (if we can identify sufficient funds), to exchange what we know and have learnt, and try to articulate a development pathway for any future work.

Looking further into the future, FAO would continue to work with the collaborators of the FishFinder 2.0 Development Platform, to:

- ✓ Develop easy to use but more sophisticated, digital systems to facilitate species recognition from digital imagery, and well resolved Artificial Intelligence tools that could either i) suggest a species name, ii) request a further more defined image, iii) deliver a truncated dichotomous tree to facilitate species identification, once an image was uploaded into such a system.
- ✓ Start to link these types of apps and tools into practical work flows (e.g. ‘smart’ forms, recreational and non-commercial/artisanal reporting), but importantly, always focusing on assisting countries to document catches and landings of exploited aquatic resources, as well as other species of interest to fisheries.
- ✓ Develop related tools, such as ones that recognize and identify fish diseases.

MORE INFORMATION

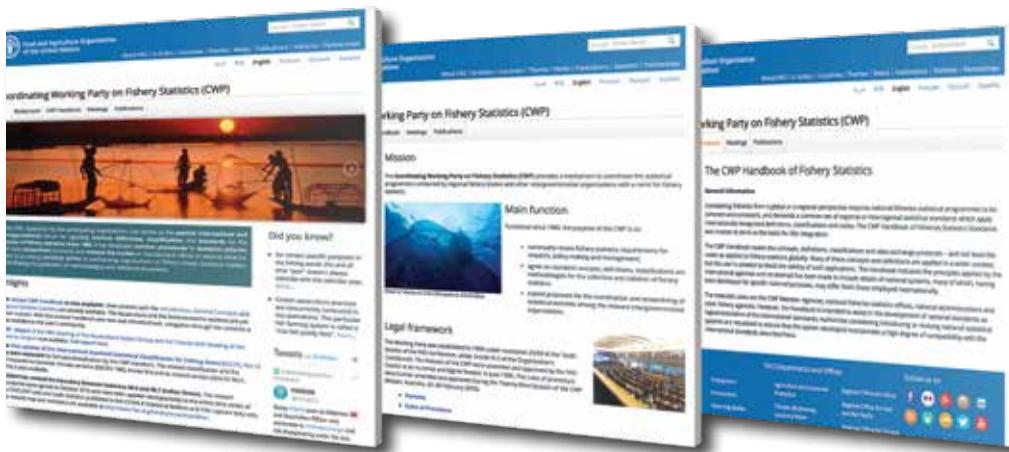
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THE REVISED AND REVAMPED

CWP website and the CWP revised Fisheries Statistics Handbook are now published!



The Secretariat of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) is pleased to inform about the release of the new and refreshed website and of the revised CWP handbook on fishery statistics. The latter is the flagship product of the CWP. The site can be accessed at: <http://www.fao.org/cwp-on-fishery-statistics>.

The CWP provides a mechanism to coordinate the statistical programmes conducted by regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental organizations with a remit for fishery statistics. Currently there are 19 participating organizations in the CWP. Supported by its participating organizations, the CWP has served as the premier international and inter-organizational forum for agreeing common definitions, classifications and standards for the collection of fishery statistics since 1960.

The revamped website includes changes to navigation, a refreshed look&feel, a section with highlights and relevant upcoming meetings, and, for the first time, it makes available to the CWP community the whole collection of CWP documents produced since its inception, in pdf format. Although this website brings about some new

features, it is however with the divulgence of the revised Handbook on Fishery Statistics, and with the further development of two Handbook sections, still under development, that the CWP seeks to offer significant added value to the fisheries statistics community.

The revision of the Handbook started in 2008 with the main objective to update the "CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistical Standards" (2004 version), according to the new fishing sector realities and fishing practices. The opportunity has been seized in order to offer the revised handbook contents in a more dynamic and structured way for a navigation across sections more intuitive and easy.

Lastly, the CWP secretariat believes that this double release will facilitate the user in browsing contents and finding new updates. The plan is in fact to periodically update the website and promote its role as a reference for all those belonging or related to the fisheries statistician's community.

MORE INFORMATION

For questions, suggestions or comments,
please contact:
CWP-secretariat@fao.org

FIRMS AND FCWC WORKSHOP

The FIRMS Secretariat of the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System partnership conducted a workshop together with the FCWC Secretariat of the Fishery Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea in Monrovia, Liberia from 23rd to 24th November 2017. The meeting was held back-to-back with the final workshop of the FAO TCP project TCP/RAF/3512 "Strengthening routine fisheries data collection in West Africa". Objective of the meeting was to: i) discuss the benefits within the CECAF-FIRMS collaboration for FCWC sub-regional organisation and its Member Countries; and ii) discuss the update of the Fishery inventories of FCWC Member countries. In addition, this was an opportunity to raise awareness on how FAO and FIRMS can support the contribution of Member Countries to Sustainable

Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 14.4.1 "Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels".

The FCWC-FIRMS Workshop had the participation of six member countries, including Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Togo, the FCWC and FIRMS secretariats, the FAO Regional Office for Africa - RAF, and the CECAF Scientific Sub-Committee. By learning what FIRMS is and what it offers, the participants recognized the added value of the Fishery inventories and the new perspectives emerged. Finally, the meeting made recommendations on the CECAF-FCWC-FIRMS collaboration, and supported the concept of a possible FCWC-FIRMS partnership.

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MORE LISTINGS

of Commercially Exploited Marine Species in the pipeline

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Appendix II listings of marine species have increased dramatically in recent years, with environmentally focused NGOs emboldened by the last CoPs results, and looking to the upcoming COP 18 as an opportunity to persuade countries environment and wildlife Ministries to ask for more.

The COFI Sub-committee on Fish Trade (COFI FT) had a session discussion on CITES issues in September 2017 (COFI FT CITES paper, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mt575e.pdf>), that yielded a number of requests from FAO Members for ongoing negotiations with the CITES Secretariat to improve the Conventions processes and practices in respect to marine species listings (CITES related 'Decisions' from COFI FT, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i8157t.pdf> page 18-19).

The process for RFMOs to engage in this upcoming 'listing' conversation started in earnest in late 2017 at the CITES Standing Committee (CITES 69th SC, 27 November-1 December 2017), where Japan has

formerly submitted a working paper to get a number of issues aired and discussed (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/69/E-SC69-71-01.pdf>). Two other papers from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines ask for much larger reforms of the listing process (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/69/E-SC69-71-02.pdf> and <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/69/E-SC69-72.pdf>). The Standing Committee lead countries for CITES are Congo, Ethiopia, Namibia, Niger, China, Kuwait, Indonesia, Bahamas, Guatemala, Peru, Hungary, Israel, Portugal, Russian Federation, Canada and New Zealand. There is value about reaching out to them with your concerns.

At the 69th SC the decisions of CITES Parties (<https://cites.org/eng/com/sc/69/sum/index.php>) supported continued collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the CITES Secretariat and reinforced their wish for effective implementation of the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding – but did not support the opening of a specific process to look for opportunities to improve the 'listing process' which Parties felt was working fine.

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FAO will continue to work with the CITES Secretariat to assess the challenges of the COP17 process, and has put aside funding to allow for a CITES related preparatory workshop (e.g. SE Asian FAO – SEAFDEC meeting in Indonesia, first half of 2018), to prepare the ground for CoP18. RFMOs, the next big conversation on this issue will be at COFI in mid-2018. Different points of view will be heard in the last CITES Standing Committee Meeting before the new CITES listing amendment proposals are released at

Christmas 2018 (which marks a 5 month countdown to the voting of CITES Parties). The vote on new amendments to the CITES Appendices will take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23 May-3 June 2019.

RFMOs involvement is relevant to ensure that fisheries voices are part of this process.

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RFBs/RFMOs



THE KEY instrumental role of RFMOs

Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) play a leading role in regional and global efforts for eliminating IUU fishing. Most already adopted, or are in the process of adopting, relevant measures in this regard. The RSN in its intersessional meeting in Oslo, Norway, 2017, highlighted the commitment in facilitating the implementation of the PSMA through RFMOs, noting that most of them have conservation and management measures in place focusing on port state measures (PSMs), in line with the PSMA.

RFMOs efforts in combatting IUU fishing include measures on port inspection, some of them have both non-contracting parties (NCP) and CP IUU Vessel

Lists; actions to promote compliance by NCP vessels; procedures for application of sanctions, and for the review of members and cooperating non-members; the use of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in combination with a catch documentation scheme and vessel catch reporting, transhipment notification, and satellite aperture radar (SAR); vessel authorization, licensing and marking requirements; market related measures; information sharing on particular area/species; the establishment of enforcement committees; the Consolidated List of Active Vessels (CLAV) from tuna RFMOs. Participative discussions with NGOs are being organized as well as capacity building activities, to support the implementation of relevant measures.



“
**PARTICIPATIVE DISCUSSIONS
WITH NGOS ARE BEING
ORGANIZED AS WELL
AS CAPACITY BUILDING
ACTIVITIES....**

”



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Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing



FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas

(1993) aims to prevent the “re-flagging” of vessels under the flags of States that are unable or unwilling to enforce international fisheries conservation and management measures.



International Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

(2001) is a purposely designed toolbox, concluded within the framework of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to combat IUU fishing, for use by all States, flag States, coastal States and port States.



FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

(2009) aims to prevent fish caught by foreign fishing vessels engaged in IUU fishing activities from being landed and entering international markets, thus removing the incentive to engage in IUU fishing.



Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance

(2014) aims to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing through the effective implementation of flag State responsibilities. This instrument is a valuable tool for strengthening compliance by flag States with their international duties and obligations regarding the flagging and control of fishing vessels.

Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is still a major problem in capture fisheries and poses a serious threat to the effective conservation and management of many fish stocks. IUU fishing can at worst lead to the total collapse of a fishery or at least seriously impair the condition of fish stocks, including efforts to rebuild stocks that have been over fished. These situations, in turn, are likely to lead to a loss of economic revenue, both directly through fish sales, and indirectly through social opportunities, such as employment. Enhanced port State measures have an important role in combating IUU fishing, principally because they complement the efforts of flag States in fulfilling their responsibilities under international law.

One of the most recent and significant achievements in the fight to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing was the entry into force of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing¹ (PSMA) on 5 June 2016. This marked the first-ever binding international agreement specifically targeting IUU fishing.

In most regions, however, the rate of adoption of port State measures is slow and

¹ Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5469t.pdf>

their implementation still inadequate. In particular, developing countries' capacity to enforce port State measures and the provisions of complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to combat IUU fishing is generally deficient². Relevant constraints include: (i) shortcomings in national policies, laws and by-laws; (ii) weak institutional and operational capacities, particularly with regard to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and enforcement systems; and, (iii) poor cooperation and coordination nationally, among States, as well as at the regional level.

The FAO Port State Measures website illustrates the progress made in this field:
<http://www.fao.org/port-state-measures/en/>

States or regional economic integration organizations can become party of the PSMA, by depositing the original instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval with the FAO Director-General (if signatory) or by depositing the original instrument of accession with the FAO Director-General.

² Such instruments and mechanisms include: conservation and management measures adopted by relevant RFMOs, the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance, the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate IUU Fishing, the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas, the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes.

FAO initiatives include:

➤ The Voluntary Guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes

In December 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a Fisheries Resolution that called upon UN Member States to initiate work within FAO on the elaboration of guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS Guidelines). Following a series of Technical Consultation sessions, the CDS Guidelines were submitted to, and approved by, the FAO Conference in July 2017. The Conference also called upon all Members, international organizations, civil society and private sector organizations to implement the Guidelines and use them as a reference in related activities.

➤ Global Study on Transshipment

FAO started a global study on transshipment consisting in bibliographic review, including some case studies, constituting the first draft of the Study or a chapter of it; a questionnaire to States, RFMOs, Non-Governmental Organizations and others, the results of which will be reflected in the above draft; (iii) an expert workshop to review the draft and provide further inputs; (iv) the final text of a Global Study on Transshipment submitted to COFI 33, in July 2018.

➤ The Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels

FAO is leading the work for the establishment of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (the Global Record). The aim of this initiative is to provide a single access point for information on vessels used for fishing and fishing-related activities with the primary objective being to combat IUU fishing by enhancing transparency and traceability.

➤ MCS Toolbox and evaluation methodology for capture fisheries

An updated MCS Toolbox and Evaluation methodology for capture fisheries will be prepared and made available to COFI 33. The MCS Toolbox and Evaluation methodology will provide technical guidance to enhance the operational effectiveness of MCS, in particular to combat IUU fishing.

➤ Collaboration between international organizations and networks

A number of international organizations are working together in various forms to combat IUU fishing, and collaboration between these is imperative. FAO actively participates in a number of these, namely the Joint FAO/ IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on IUU Fishing, and meetings of other international organizations such as ILO, WTO, UNODC, together with expert meetings of the International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (IMCS) Network.

➤ Technical assistance/capacity development for PSMA implementation

Especially to assist developing States.

➤ IUU fishing guidelines on methodologies for estimating IUU catches

Recognizing the importance of quantifying IUU fishing, whether at the national or regional level, the 32nd session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) 2016 supported the development of technical guidelines on FAO methodologies and indicators for estimating the magnitude and impact of IUU fishing and called for reliable periodic estimates of IUU fishing, including at the regional level.

Some examples from RFBs/RMOs activities in fighting IUU fishing

Study on the implementation of a Regional Fisheries Observer Program in the ATLAFCO region

> This synthesis summarizes the main findings of the study commissioned by ATLAFCO pursuant to the Rabat Declaration on regional cooperation for the fight against IUU fishing adopted by the 9th ATLAFCO Ministerial Conference in September 2014.

The terms of reference of this study included a review of the contextual elements and recommendations aiming at developing a Regional Fisheries Observer Program implementing an observer scheme with the following features: common to fulfill all mandatory or voluntary requirements; single, with an unique mandate approved by all concerned entities; and permanent to cover all fishing trips of concerned vessels.

Use of fisheries observers as a tool to monitor fishing fleets activities, and as a source of data for scientific purpose

is considered in international law, and in particular by the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea and its implementing acts, and by FAO voluntary directives for promotion of responsible fishing practices or international plans of action against IUU fishing.

The Regional Fisheries Observer Program will thus support two essential pillars of fisheries governance through inter-State cooperation promoted by the law of the sea:

1. monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing fleets, with positive effects on the fights against IUU fishing, and
2. improving scientific advice in support of fisheries management through the provision of new data that is currently lacking.

http://www.comhafat.org/en/files/actualites/doc_actualite_160.pdf

FFA regional approach to Port State Measures (PSM) and the PSMA

> Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Members have a comprehensive and effective suite of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) activities, programs and tools to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in Pacific tuna fisheries¹. Port State controls are one such MCS tool.

The entry into force of the PSMA has changed the international dynamic regarding MCS activities. As it is the first binding global agreement to combat IUU fishing, a significant amount of international pressure has been placed on Pacific island countries to ratify it. Although the objectives of the PSMA are aligned with FFA Members' objectives (i.e. to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing), the PSMA is not sensitive to the nature of IUU fishing in the Pacific. It does not effectively address the

specific requirements and limitations of Pacific islands countries, or take into account the MCS activities FFA Members already implement. Therefore, some FFA Members have exercised their sovereign right to not ratify the PSMA².

In 2017, the Forum Fisheries Committee (FFC- FFA Members' governing body) agreed to pursue an integrated approach to establish a regional PSM framework building on existing MCS activities. This approach is consistent with the main objective of the PSMA (combatting IUU fishing) and will provide support to all FFA Members regardless of their status with the PSMA.

¹ McEachan, F (2016). *Evaluation of the Regional FFA MCS Framework*.

² Five of the seventeen FFA Members have ratified or acceded to the PSMA: Australia, New Zealand, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu.

FFA regional approach to PSM

> FFA Members' MCS measures apply to domestic and foreign fishing vessels and support a PSM approach that is based on IUU and compliance risk assessment across all vessels authorised to fish or that enter their ports. This approach is suitable to addressing the nature of IUU fishing in the Pacific, which mostly stems from licensed vessels¹. This may contrast to other regions where there may be higher unlicensed vessel activity and use of ports by unlicensed fishing vessels.

A comprehensive 5-year Pacific Islands PSM Project commenced in August 2017 to facilitate FFA Members'

¹ MRAG Asia Pacific (2016). *Towards the Quantification of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Pacific Islands Region*.

integrated approach to PSM. This project is informed by a 2016 PSM Gap Analysis Study² which identified where possible PSM gaps and weaknesses exist within both national and regional FFA port State control frameworks. The PSM Project will develop a framework for regional PSM which recognises the PSMA and other international agreements, while focusing on national and regional capacity development to strengthen PSM. The FFA regional approach will support the needs of all Members, whether party to the PSMA or not.

² MRAG Asia Pacific (2017). *Gap Analysis of FFA Member Port State Controls Against the FAO Port State Measures Agreement*.

WCPFC

> All FFA Members are members of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). In this RFMO, FFA Members have led four unsuccessful attempts to adopt a specific Conservation and Management Measure on PSM. These proposals were drafted to ensure consistency with the objectives of the PSMA, while avoiding any unnecessary or duplicative burdens on SIDS. A revised proposal, negotiated in advance with other key members, is due for consideration in December 2017. Many Pacific SIDS have been unable to commit to the PSMA because they simply do not have the capacity, technology, legislation, systems and personnel to comply with its requirements. The FFA proposal to the WCPFC caters for both parties and non-parties to the PSMA by assisting States to comply with PSMA obligations (e.g. meeting inspection levels), while also helping SIDS effectively strengthen their port State measures.

CONCLUSIONS

FFA Members have a combination of tools, programs, assets and activities at the national and regional level that represents a world class MCS Framework that has achieved positive results. Port State controls are merely one of these tools, and FFA Members will continue to pursue an integrated approach to establish a regional PSM framework. This framework will consider existing national and regional MCS activities, and the specific nature of IUU fishing in the Pacific.

Regarding the PSMA, outcomes will differ between FFA Members based on national position and capacity:

- Those that have ratified the PSMA will be better placed to meet their obligations;
- Some additional members may decide to become parties;
- Other members may be satisfied with strengthening existing national efforts to a point that they can demonstrate a compatible level of port State control without having to ratify the PSMA.

NPFC

during 10-12 July 2017. Major topics discussed during the meeting included; overview of the fisheries in the Convention Area, progress in the first stage of VMS study, the outcomes of the TCC Webex preparatory meeting, review of MCS-related issues from SC, compliance work plan and priorities, Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs), the Observer Program. Among the tasks identified by Members at higher priority in terms of urgency, there were assessing compliance, VMS, and vessel registry to be progressed through

The 2nd Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) meeting was held in Sapporo, Japan

intersessional electronic works by forming the Small Working Groups (SWG) composed of a focal point of contact of each Member. The meeting reviewed current MCS-related CMMs and endorsed them as edited: CMM on Vessel Registry, IUU fishery, Interim Transshipment Procedures, Vessels with No Nationality, Bottom Fisheries and VME Protection NW Pacific Ocean, Bottom Fisheries and VME Protection NE Pacific Ocean, and CMM on Chub Mackerel, and Pacific saury. The outstanding proposed CMM for high seas boarding and inspection was discussed and endorsed. Finally, the TCC recommended to the Commission that the Commission consider Information Security Guidelines, adopt the Provisional IUU Vessel List.



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NEAFC

NEAFC continues to place great emphasis on action against Illegal, Unreported and

Unregulated (IUU) fisheries. A major step to enhance monitoring, control and enforcement was taken when the basis for an Electronic Reporting System (ERS) for NEAFC was formally adopted in 2016. This year's adoption of the United Nation's international standard for exchange of fisheries information was a further step forward in this process. Development of technical solutions for the ERS will continue in 2018 on the basis of arrangements at the meeting.



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GFCM

16-20 October 2017, the GFCM took decisive steps to advance in the implementation of its mid-term strategy towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and to secure a strategy for sustainable aquaculture development. As a result of the commitment emanating from the GFCM mid-term strategy and

On the occasion of its forty-first session, held in Budva, Montenegro on

thanks to the joint efforts of Mediterranean and Black Sea riparian countries, no fewer than eight binding recommendations and six resolutions were adopted. Along with the many activities already launched to achieve the ambitious goals set, these decisions will be paramount for the recovery of fish stocks, the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the protection of vulnerable habitats and the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.



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ICCAT

The Commission convened to evaluate the results of the 2017 working plan

together with the current status of application of the regulatory measures in force and to establish the conservation and management measures for the future. During 2017, four species were subject to a full scientific stock assessment: bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*); Atlantic swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*); Atlantic shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*); and Mediterranean albacore (*Thunnus albacares*). Overall nine new Recommendations covering relevant issues related to species conservation and fisheries management were adopted.



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NEWS FROM MEMBERS



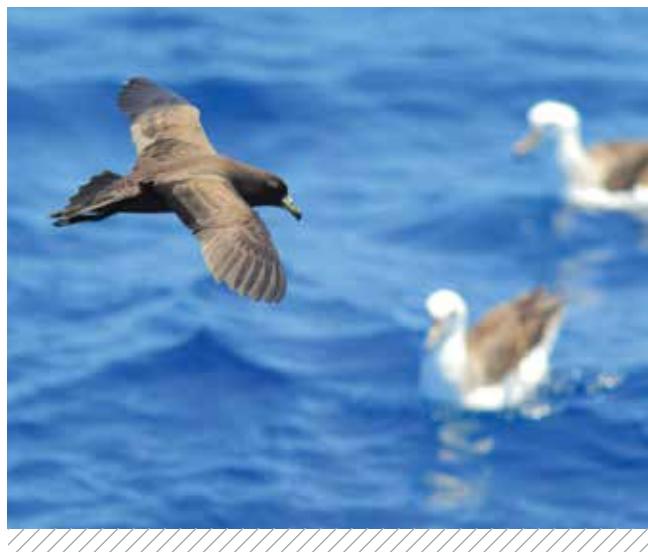
ACAP



Latest news

The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) is a multilateral agreement which seeks to conserve albatrosses and petrels by coordinating international activity to mitigate known threats to their populations. ACAP came into force in February 2004 and covers [31 species](#) of threatened albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters. Currently there are 13 Parties to the Agreement. ACAP is supported by a small Secretariat (located in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia) which consists of an Executive Secretary, a Science Officer and an honorary Information Officer.

One of the most significant threats facing albatrosses and petrels is mortality resulting from interactions with fishing gear. In addition, birds may be threatened at



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their breeding sites by introduced predators, diseases, habitat loss and human disturbance. The Agreement provides a focus for international cooperation and the exchange of information and expertise. Although individual nations are taking measures to protect albatrosses and petrels, international cooperative action is also required. Albatrosses and petrels are susceptible to threats operating throughout their wide migratory ranges that extend across national boundaries into

international waters and it is unlikely that actions by any one nation alone will be effective in improving their global conservation status. International cooperation on albatross and petrel conservation thus enhances the prospects for successful conservation measures across their ranges.

The Agreement continues to work with tuna Regional Fishery Management Organizations (tRFMOs), the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living

Resources (CCAMLR) and other relevant fisheries management organizations to encourage the adoption of best-practice mitigation measures to reduce seabird mortality in longline fisheries in international waters outside national jurisdictions. Nearly all of the tRFMOs have in the last few years adopted conservation measures incorporating ACAP's best-practice advice for seabird bycatch mitigation in pelagic longline fisheries (a combination of night setting, line weighting and

deployment of bird-scaring lines). ACAP has also been working to reduce seabird mortality in trawl and other fisheries where seabird bycatch occurs.



Meetings & events

The Tenth Meeting of ACAP's Advisory Committee (AC10) was held in Wellington, New Zealand in September 2017. Meetings of the AC's Seabird Bycatch and Population and Conservation Status Working Groups preceded AC10. A workshop on gadfly petrels in the genus *Pterodroma* and other small burrowing petrels was held at the same time. The Wellington meetings took note of two important initiatives that will help protect threatened albatrosses and petrels: plans by the United Kingdom to eradicate introduced House Mice *Mus musculus* on [Gough Island](#) in the South Atlantic in 2019 and by South Africa to eradicate mice on [Marion Island](#) in the southern Indian Ocean in 2020.

The Sixth Session of the ACAP Meeting of the Parties (MoP6) will be held in the, Kruger National Park, South Africa in May 2018. This will be the third time ACAP has met in South Africa, starting with the final negotiation meeting for the Agreement held in Cape Town in 2001. South Africa is a founder Party to ACAP.

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- Cooper, J., Baker, G.B., Double, M.C., Gales, R., Papworth, W., Tasker, M.L. & Waugh, S.M. 2006. The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels: rationale, history, progress and the way forward. Marine Ornithology 34: 1-5.



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Left to right:

- Mr Ian Angus (Acting Director of the Aquatic Unit, DOC, New Zealand)
Mrs Tatiana Neves (Brazil, Advisory Committee Vice-Chair)
Mr Mark Tasker (UK Head of Delegation, former Advisory Committee Chair)
Dr Marco Favero (ACAP Executive Secretary) and
Mr Nathan Walker (Advisory Committee Chair, MPI, New Zealand) at the Tenth Meeting of the ACAP Advisory Committee.
John Cooper, Information Officer, ACAP Secretariat.



COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO



Latest news

During this year ATLAFCO was very active by its efforts to broaden its partnership. The secretariat was able to make contacts with the Inter-African Bureau of Animal Resources of the AU (AU-IBAR) with a view to institutionalizing the existing cooperation between the two entities for the benefits of the African countries.

A number of activities were carried out by ATLAFCO in the past months.



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Meetings & events

A TRAINING WORKSHOP IN MOROCCO

In line with the provisions of Article 8.1.6 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which states that "States should take steps individually, in agreement with other States or in agreement with international organizations to integrate fisheries operations into maritime search and rescue systems", ATLAFCO organized a training session from 23-25 May 2017 in El Jadida (Morocco) on The Function of the Coordinator of Maritime Rescue Mission.

The objective of this meeting was to strengthen the capabilities of the rescue services of the African region for a better providing of human life-saving at sea, in particular fishermen, in the maritime waters of Africa.

The event had noteworthy participation of member countries (Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, Cabo Verde, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Liberia, Gambia, Gabon, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and Morocco).

The training provided a set of information and techniques enabling the Coordinator of the Maritime Rescue Mission, in operation at the Maritime Rescue Coordination Center, to carry out his mission properly on receiving a distress message. It includes:

- Assessment of the alarm and determination of the emergency phase;
- Responsibility for coordinating operations and managing resources;
- Preparation of the plan of operations;
- Monitoring of operations;
- Stopping or suspending operations.



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COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO (cont'd)

ADAPTATION OF FISHING POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ATLAFCO AREA

Organized on 11-12 September 2017 in Tangier, Morocco. The overall objective of this workshop was to share and validate the program proposal on the implementation of strategies for adapting climate change policies and

practices taking into account the scientific and technical tools as well as the already built experiences.

The meeting called for the setting up of a select committee to think about the appropriate governance bodies (role and responsibilities of each institution) and on the functioning of the program.



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MARITIME PIRACY OFF THE AFRICAN ATLANTIC COAST: EXTENT AND PROSPECTS FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE FIGHT

The organization of this meeting (18-19 September 2017) in Tangier, Morocco is a contribution to the efforts of the international community to make seas and oceans secure spaces, enhancing and beneficial to the development of coastal countries and beyond. The meeting provided a better understanding of maritime,

legal, economic and social piracy, as well as the various initiatives and their implementation in the Region.

At the end of this think tank, the participants launched a call for action, called "*Tangier Appeal for the safety and security of maritime spaces in West Africa*", inviting different actors to activate the operationalization of maritime strategies and the recommended mechanisms to ensure the safety and security of maritime spaces in West Africa (Lomé Charter, Yaoundé Code of Conduct, etc.)



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Latest news

MILESTONE GFCM DECISIONS SET NEW TRENDS IN MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA FISHERIES, BUDVA, MONTENEGRO

After a week of fruitful discussions, the GFCM has adopted a historic number of decisions, 14 in total, which set an ambitious pace for the region towards concrete action supporting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

On the occasion of its forty-first session, held in Budva, Montenegro on 16-20 October 2017, the GFCM took decisive steps to advance in the implementation of its mid-term strategy towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and to secure a strategy for sustainable aquaculture development. As a result of the commitment emanating from the GFCM mid-term strategy and thanks to the joint efforts of Mediterranean and Black Sea riparian countries, no fewer than eight binding recommendations and six resolutions were adopted. Along with the many activities already launched to achieve the ambitious goals set, these decisions will be paramount for the recovery of fish stocks, the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the protection of vulnerable habitats and the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Of particular note is the decision to establish a fisheries restricted area in the Jabuka/Pomo Pit – a key area in terms of essential fish habitats located in the Adriatic Sea. Other notable decisions include the agreement to manage blackspot seabream fisheries in the Alboran Sea and turbot fisheries in the Black Sea; the establishment of a regional plan of action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; the decision to implement an international joint inspection and surveillance scheme in waters outside national jurisdiction in

the Strait of Sicily; the establishment of a regional adaptive management plan for the exploitation of red coral in the Mediterranean Sea; and the decision to implement a strategy for the sustainable development of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture.

The resolve shown by riparian states in Montenegro is a significant step towards reverting the alarming status of the stocks, boosting blue growth and sustaining livelihoods for the region. Furthermore, these actions take place against the backdrop of riparian states commitments towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This outcome also represents significant steps towards reaching the commitments put forth through the Malta MedFish4Ever Ministerial Declaration and the Bucharest Declaration of the High-level Conference towards enhanced cooperation on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture.

In line with the momentum created, the GFCM also announced the organization of a number of important events in 2018. In particular, a high-level conference for the Black Sea will be organized in Bulgaria, a high-level meeting on small-scale fisheries is planned to take place in Malta and an international Forum on Fisheries Science is being organized at FAO headquarters at the end of the year. These major events will shine a light on the efforts currently being deployed to secure regional cooperation, support the region's small-scale fisheries sector and enhance global scientific expertise in support of the work of the GFCM and of other regional fisheries management organizations.

Finally, the GFCM renewed its strong commitment to cooperation when granting cooperating non-contracting party status to the Republic of Moldova, resulting in a new total of four countries actively collaborating and participating in GFCM activities. This is an important signal that shows a clear and shared willingness to work together in reaching common goals, levelling the playing field in the region and achieving the important targets set for fisheries and aquaculture in the near future.



GFCM (cont'd)

"Despite the complex situation in the region, the GFCM has made enormous strides to promote cooperation among all riparian States in order to build a better future for fisheries and aquaculture in the region. We are determined to continue to foster a subregional approach and work more closely with those countries facing similar challenges", said Abdellah Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary.

In noting that the opening of the GFCM session coincided with the celebration of the World Food Day, a major global FAO event, Árni M. Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, made clear that "the GFCM, in its capacity of Article XIV body, has a key role to play in promoting food security in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea by ensuring the sustainability of the region's living marine resources for many generations to come".

Despite the complex situation in the region, the GFCM has made enormous strides to promote cooperation among all riparian States in order to build a better future for fisheries and aquaculture in the region



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Meetings & events

25TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

Raising the bar and the bluefin tuna quota for 2018, giving teeth to shortfin mako shark management, swords crossed on swordfish management and improving performance were the main outcomes of the 25th Regular meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) 21 November 2017, Marrakech, Morocco.

Marrakech the Red City, where the traditional and contemporary mingle to lure the visitor with a promise of incomparable sensations, played host to the 25th Regular Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) from 14 to 21 November 2017. The bar has been raised when it comes to showing flexibility, claimed Martin Tsimenzi the ICCAT Chair, as after more than four years of negotiations, a spirit of compromise has almost led to the conclusion of the Working Group on Convention Amendment, although the text could not be finalised, delegations came so close that the Commission undertook to do this in one last meeting of the Working Group.

The Commission convened to evaluate the results of the 2017 working plan together with the current status of application of the regulatory measures in force and to establish the conservation and management measures for the future. During 2017, four species were subject to a full scientific stock assessment: bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*); Atlantic swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*); Atlantic shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*); and Mediterranean albacore (*Thunnus albacares*). Overall nine new Recommendations covering relevant issues related to species conservation and fisheries management were adopted. Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel (Senegal) has been elected as new ICCAT Executive Secretary.

The Red City saw a considerable increase in the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna, following the advice of the scientific committee. The new approved TAC for 2018 is of 28,200 t. While a larger pie to share should have led to greater possibilities of consensus, the demands by those who already had a quota for a larger slice made negotiations tougher than ever, but in the end tentative agreement was reached on the quota share for 2018, pending further negotiations in March 2018 for the share out in future years. While 28,200-32,240-36,000 t are the TACs for the period 2018-2020 for this emblematic species, the details of the new management plan could not be agreed, so most of the current provisions were left in place for a further year.

While initially it seemed that it might be daggers drawn on the Atlantic swordfish stocks, the wave of cooperation continued and consensus was quickly reached on a four year management plan up to 2021.

Shortfin mako shark was another species under scrutiny, with myriad proposals on the table for consideration. Agreement was reached finally on measures for the northern stock. In 2016, a mechanism for review of compliance with existing shark measures was adopted, but the full review was deferred to an intersessional meeting in 2018 of the Compliance Committee, in order to give this issue the time it deserves.

The warm Moroccan sun set the right climate for agreement on supplemental tropical tuna measures, with a ban on wasteful discards from the purse seine fishery, in an attempt to ensure food security for the coastal States affected by these fisheries.

In addition to the long awaited management measures for Mediterranean albacore, Harvest Control Rules for Northern Atlantic albacore were agreed, and technical details of the electronic bluefin catch document scheme (eBCD) were tweaked.

The Compliance Committee expedited its work in 2017 under the new process adopted in 2016, but one of the

ICCAT (cont'd)



25TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

LIST OF ADOPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT on prohibition on discards of tropical tunas caught by purse seiners
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish, Rec. 16-03
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT amending the Recommendation for the conservation of south Atlantic swordfish, Rec. 16-04
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT on a harvest control rule for the North Atlantic albacore supplementing the multiannual conservation and management programme, Rec.16-06
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT establishing management measures for the stock of Mediterranean albacore
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT for an interim conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 14-04 on bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT on the conservation of North Atlantic stock of shortfin mako caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
- thumb up Recommendation by ICCAT amending Recommendation 15-10 on the application of the eBCD system

recurrent complaints of all Contracting Parties was the number of reporting requirements which membership of ICCAT entailed – currently over 150. Online reporting and a more streamlined approach is clearly the only way for countries to be able to meet their obligations in the future.

The Commission also considered the recommendations which had arisen from an external performance review and took steps to develop an action plan for the application of the advice contained in the review. This will require work by all the subsidiary bodies as well as intersessional work.

The Commission took the opportunity to extend its thanks to Mr Driss Meski (Morocco), who will retire from the position of Executive Secretary in 2018, for the excellent service he had provided to the Commission over the last fourteen years. ICCAT also elected a new Chairman, Mr Raul Delgado (Panama) and expressed its profound appreciation for the excellent service of the outgoing Chair, Mr Martin Tsamenyi (Ghana) had dedicated to the Commission over the past two years, and highlighted the progress made under his leadership. Additionally, the Commission reiterated its confidence in the 1st Vice-Chair Mr Stefaan Depypere (European Union) and elected Mrs. Zakia Driouich (Morocco) as 2nd Vice-Chair.

The 25th Regular Meeting of ICCAT was opened by the Secretary of State of Moroccan Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Waters and Forests on behalf of the Minister, who welcomed over 630 delegates from 44 Contracting Parties, four cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities and observers from two non-Contracting Parties six international organisations and 23 NGOs. ICCAT wants to express the most sincere gratitude to all the persons who, directly or indirectly, individually or as representatives, made this meeting possible.

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Latest news

4th International Symposium

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE WORLD'S OCEANS

June 4-8, 2018
Washington, DC

Call for abstracts is open
for the 4th international
symposium on the effects of
climate change on the world's
oceans

[http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/
news-archive/news/Pages/Climate-change-
symposium-calling-for-abstracts.aspx](http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/Climate-change-symposium-calling-for-abstracts.aspx)



 Latest news

Dr Rebecca Lent has recently taken up the position of Executive Secretary of the International Whaling Commission and looks forward to working with the network on shared challenges.

A marine economist by training, she earned a Ph.D. in Resource Economics from Oregon State University in 1984. Her dissertation focused on modeling price determination in the global salmon market. After completing her dissertation, she received the Chateaubriand Fellowship from the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C. to conduct post-doctoral research at the Concarneau Laboratoire de Biologie Maritime on the ex-vessel market impacts of government minimum prices. Dr Lent then moved to Canada to teach and conduct research in agricultural and resource economics at the Université du Québec

à Rimouski (1984-86) and Université Laval (1986-1992). In 1992 she joined the Highly Migratory Species Division at NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, where she served as Economist and then Division Chief. Dr Lent joined the Senior Executive Service in 2000, serving as the Regional Administrator of the Southwest Region, the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, and the Director of the Office of International Affairs. She joined the Marine Mammal Commission in 2013.



REBECCA LENT
Executive Secretary
IWC



Latest news

Lake Tanganyika Authority (LTA) is an intergovernmental organization which its' primary functions is to coordinate the implementation of the Convention on the Sustainable Management of Lake Tanganyika while represent the common interests of the Contracting States in matters concerning the sustainable resource management of Lake Tanganyika and its Basin. The Lake Tanganyika Convention provides a legal framework for regional cooperation on the conservation of biological diversity, sustainable management and implementation of harmonized laws and standards

for sustainable use of natural resources in the Lake Tanganyika basin. LTA has a mandate and vision to safeguard Lake Tanganyika and its natural resources. It has two departments which are; department of Fisheries & Aquaculture and of Environment/water issues. Both departments are led by specialists who have more than 30 years' work experience. LTA has already implemented and supervised several projects in the field of sustainable fisheries management, environmental interventions and support for community livelihoods. However, little have been done under the field of aquaculture. All of the above programmes are implemented by involving riparian countries, stakeholders, donors, and partners from other Development organizations. To mention few these are UNDP/GEF, UNEP; ADB, EU, FAO/SMART, NIGLAS.



Meetings & events

A dynamic agenda in late 2017 included, among many others:

> Lake Tanganyika Authority, the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency, The East African Community and the World Bank, jointly organized a workshop on the Lake Tanganyika Integrated Transport and Environment Programme. The workshop was held on 2-3 November, 2017 and aimed at project identification and fund mobilization for a multi-sector program covering transport, trade, environment and water resource management for countries within the Lake Tanganyika Basin.

The workshop brought together representatives from the United Republic of Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Burundi as well as the representatives of Development Partners including: World Bank, Africa Development Bank, European Union,

Trade Mark East Africa, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Belgium Embassy, Lukuga Project and NEPAD Agency.

> The LTA's Executive Director Mr Jean-Marie Nibirantije, made a speech on how LTA is promoting environmental protection and fisheries management actions in four countries that are Parties to the Convention on the Sustainable Management of Lake Tanganyika . He elaborated that this is being carried out in collaboration with various partners including the African Development Bank and UNDP/GEF, which disbursed USD 52.5 million over Six-year period. He also mentioned the collaboration between LTA and the World Bank in the study accessibility of different ports on Lake Tanganyika. Results of the consultation led to identification of other projects such as watershed management along the various ports for better control of sediments that are major problem for accessibility to some of them.



LTA (cont'd)

➤ LTA joined other organizations to contribute and share experiences on Paris Agreement Implementation. LTA was represented by her Executive Director, Eng. Jean Marie Nibirantije. Several themes were on the agenda but it is worth noting that there was no appropriate response to the financing issue, as part of Paris Agreement, for our countries which are already in a risk in of climate change impacts. In line with this conference, the Authority also had an opportunity to discuss with other participants including the Deputy Director of JICA (Japanese International Cooperation Agency), Climate Green Fund (FVC), and the French Alliance for Development, the French Agency for Development and attended various presentations in COMIFAC group, G77 and China, Africa Group and IUCN. The discussion conducted makes it possible for us to meet our various partners with assurance.

➤ LTA's participated in the Africa Transport Policy Program (SSATP), Regional Economic Communities Transport Coordination Committee (REC-TCC) meeting, organized in partnership with the Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative (MCLI) and in coordination with the African Corridor Management Alliance (ACMA) Secretariat held on 20-22 November 2017 at the Southern Sun OR Tambo International Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa. LTA was represented by the Director of Environment (Mr Gabriel Hakizimana). He also participated in the Regional Transit Workshop held in the same place in Johannesburg from 22-24 November, 2017. During the two meetings, the LTA representative took an opportunity to discuss with World Bank and other partners present in the meeting on the necessity of the development of the Bujumbura-Mpulungu Corridor which could help the Lake Tanganyika riparian countries to extend the trade from the Lake Tanganyika basin to South Africa and Central Africa.

➤ In partnership with the Nature Conservancy (TNC), LTA organized a training on Lake Tanganyika ATLAS for Conservation and Sustainable Development. This training is being held in the four countries starting from December, 2017 to February, 2018. The participants bring together civil servants from different ministries, research institutions of the relevant ministries, related stakeholders and academia of the LTA members.

LTA is continuing looking and negotiating with partners for supporting Conservation and management initiatives to the Lake Tanganyika, including:

- Aquaculture development in the region by developing best practices Management under - ecosystem approach to aquaculture, aquaculture zonation for taking into consideration of water quality management as well as avoiding conflicts among water users. The selection of the spatial area designated for aquaculture development and careful selection of farm sites are crucial initial steps to ensure the success and sustainability of aquaculture and implementation of best practices.
- Partners to support the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity on Lake Tanganyika.
- Catchment management to tackle the lake sedimentation for sustainability of lake biodiversity
- Ensure lobbying processes on harmonizing guidelines and policies of fisheries and aquaculture in the region.
- Pollution control initiatives
- Improve social infrastructure and enhance trade in the region.



Latest news

THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI JOINS THE LAKE VICTORIA FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

At the time of signing the Convention for the Establishment of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization in 1994, and entering into force on 24 May 1996, the East African Community comprised three partner states who were sharing the lake Victoria, namely The Republic of Kenya, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania. When the East African community was revived in 1999, the LVFO was adopted as the regional technical institute responsible for the management of the fisheries and development of Aquaculture in the region, as per article 9 (3) of the Treaty for the Establishment of East African community, which was signed on 30 November 1999, and entered into force on 7 July 2000. Two new member states, namely the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda, were included in the East African community.

There has been a push to formally align it with the Regional Economic Community – which is the East African community, but this has since expanded to six-

namely, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan.

In line with the PFRS there has been a deliberate attempt to align the RFMO's to the Regional Economic Communities in Africa.

A functional review of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization as the Technical arm of the East African community on fisheries and Aquaculture and the proposed plan of Action for the alignment of the Convention for the establishment of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization LVFO to EAC and the African Union Policy Framework and Reform strategy on Fisheries and aquaculture in Africa, was commission in 2015, and the LVFO Council of Ministers on 29th January 2016, approved the amendment of the LVFO Convention as per article XX of the convention. This meant that the operational scope of the Lake Victoria Fisheries organization extended to all the EAC partner states and the mandate includes the East African Community water bodies, Aquaculture and Fish Trade.

This was communicated to the depositary and the concerned partner states, hence the Republic of Burundi depositing the ascension document. The other two partner states, the Republic of Rwanda, and South Sudan are in the process of depositing their instruments of ascension with the Director General of FAO.

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Meetings & events

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), recently held its 39th Annual Meeting from 18–22 September 2017, hosted by Canada in Montréal, Québec. The meeting marked NAFO's first meeting since the coming-into-force of significant amendments to the NAFO Convention, aimed to modernize NAFO, in particular by incorporating an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. This approach includes safeguarding the marine environment, conserving marine biodiversity and minimizing the risk of long term adverse effects of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem. The amendments also streamline NAFO's decision-making process, strengthen the obligations of Contracting Parties, Flag States and Port States, and institute a formal dispute settlement mechanism.

During the meeting, significant decisions were made on the following:

➤ NAFO agreed to a management strategy for Greenland halibut. This management plan will be in force from 2018 to 2023 and the TAC for this stock will be adjusted annually depending on the agreed Harvest Control Rule (HCR).

➤ NAFO agreed to relaunch its second performance review. This performance review will be completed by the next Annual Meeting in September 2018 and will address: conservation and management; compliance and enforcement; governance; science; international cooperation; financial and administrative issues. The previous NAFO performance review took place in 2011, with all of its recommendations having been addressed.

➤ NAFO agreed to protect the entire New England Seamount chain, amending the boundary of the area closed to bottom fishing to include all peaks in the chain. The protection of the entire chain, as a whole, will help in sustaining the biological connectivity and function of seamount communities at all depths. In addition, procedures leading to these closures were further streamlined.



©NAFO

NAFO (cont'd)

> NAFO agreed to a benchmark assessment of cod on the Flemish Cap in 2018. This benchmark assessment will explore the robustness of the current assessment model and evaluate alternatives including multi-species models, with a number of international experts being invited to review. This assessment aims to improve confidence in future assessments of this stock.

> NAFO re-elected current President, Stéphane Artano (France in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon), for

his second term, and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) was elected as vice-Chair.



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Latest news

MARINE MAMMALS AS RESOURCE

NAMMCO, in liaison with the WWF Arctic Programme and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, convened a Breakout Session at the Arctic Circle Conference in Reykjavik, Iceland 14 October 2017. The programme - four talks and a panel discussion addressed the questions:

Can (some) populations of Arctic seals qualify as blue resources contributing to food security? Do they represent a sustainable resource with a low ecological cost that meets the dietary needs and food preferences of Arctic communities? Is sealing responsibly managed? Do bans on seal products protect Arctic seals?

Arctic sealing was put in a global ecological and blue growth perspective and it was examined whether Arctic sealing and the EU ban of seal product respond to the criteria/definition of blue growth: sustainability, low carbon, resource efficiency and optimisation, social inclusion. Clearly the first is while the second is not.



ARCTIC SEALING: THREAT OR BLUE PROSPECT?

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The session was widely attended by some 120 people from Inuit communities in Alaska, Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut and Greenland in addition to participants from Canada, several European countries, Iceland, Norway and USA; with overall a wide age span.

READ MORE

<https://nammco.no/topics/november-24-2017-report-from-arctic-sealing-threat-or-blue-prospect/>



Meetings & events

The NAMMCO Scientific Committee held its annual meeting 14–17 November in Reykjavik, Iceland. The meeting reviewed the status of the marine mammal stocks in the NAMMCO area (Greenland, Faroe Islands, Iceland and Norway). For reports of the Scientific Committee meetings see <https://nammco.no/topics/scientific-committee-reports/>

The NAMMCO By-Catch Working Group (BYCWG) met from 2-4 May 2017 to:

- > Review the Norwegian harbour and grey seals and harbour porpoise by-catch data and estimates;
- > Review the Icelandic lumpfish and cod gillnet fishery by-catch data and estimates;
- > Review the situation in the Faroese mid-water trawling - precise fleet description, by-catch risk and reporting; methods for improving the situation;
- > Review the information from Greenland on reporting of by-catch for the different species.

 NAMMCO (cont'd)

The BYCWG gave recommendations to Iceland and Norway on improving their analysis of the by-catch estimates, and these updated analyses are underway. The BYCWG also made recommendations to all countries on improving by-catch observation and data collection.

READ MORE

<https://nammco.no/topics/sc-working-group-reports/>



©Carsten Egevang, Greenland Nature Institute

The NAMMCO-JCNB (Canada-Greenland Joint Commission on Narwhal and Beluga) Joint Working Group (JWG) met from 8-11 March 2017.

Icebreaking/shipping concerns

- The JWG expressed concern regarding shipping and icebreaking activities in the wintering grounds of narwhal and beluga in Baffin Bay where winter time shipping is unprecedented. The JWG also expressed concern that cumulative effects should be considered when new shipping and icebreaking activities are proposed for narwhal and beluga habitat areas.
- The JWG plans a workshop to address concerns over changes in management advice in response to the non-hunting takes and changes in distribution resulting from development and warming of the arctic. The Terms of Reference for the workshop will be to:
 - Identify specific effects of climate change on belugas and narwhals
- Request papers on changes in distribution, population dynamics, etc. resulting from climate change in Canada/Greenland waters
- The focus will be less on the mechanism of the effects, and more on identifying simple predictors and possible consequences
- Identify specific ways that the JWG's advice may be informed by these effects
- Climate change may affect timing and distribution of hunted populations.
- Climate change may affect population model parameters used for assessment.
- Development in the arctic may result in changes in habitat and carrying capacity as well as increased anthropogenic disturbance which may require changes in assessment models.

 NAMMCO (cont'd)

Narwhal quotas in East Greenland

The JWG agreed to recognise the hunting areas in East Greenland, Tasiilaq, Kangerlussuaq and Ittoqqortormiit, as three separate management areas. Maintaining these areas as three stocks is a more precautionary approach and hence is more likely to avoid local depletion. Based on the work of the JWG, the NAMMCO SC agreed that catches should be reduced in both Ittoqqortormiit and Kangerlussuaq, and that no catches should be taken south of 68°N.

READ MORE

<https://nammco.no/topics/sc-working-group-reports/>



Global Review of Monodontids

NAMMCO convened a “Global Review of Monodontids (GROM)” from 13-17 March 2017. The GROM recognised 22 beluga stocks, and 12 narwhal stocks, some being different than previously recognised. GROM reviewed information on abundance, trend, calculations on sustainability of removals, and habitat concerns, discussed quality of the data available (e.g.

whether the abundance was based on a survey versus expert opinion) and assigned a status of concern - high, moderate, or low - relative to the other stocks in that species.

The meeting also discussed environmental/habitat concerns for each stock, and for both species as a whole, and gaps in data that are critical to continued monitoring of belugas and narwhals.

 **NASCO****Latest news**

Dr Emma Hatfield has replaced Dr Peter Hutchinson as Secretary of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization. She started in post on 1 October 2017. Dr Hatfield started her scientific career as a fisheries biologist with the British Antarctic Survey where she worked

for 10 years visiting the South Atlantic and Antarctic Oceans. She has since worked in the northwest Atlantic, the northeast Pacific and, more recently, in the northeast Atlantic, during 15 years as a fisheries scientist and fisheries advisor at the Scottish Government.

She returned to the UK in September 2017, after three years working in European fisheries policy in the European Commission.



EMMA HATFIELD
Secretary
NASCO

**NEAFC****Latest news**

Darius Campbell – new Secretary of NEAFC, following the departure of Stefan Asmundsson.

Dr Darius Campbell had a long career in international development in India, Nigeria and Jordan before returning to UK in 2001, when he joined the Department of Environment Food and

Rural Affairs (Defra). As a Deputy Director in Defra, Darius managed a team which covered a variety of fisheries and marine issues including the UK's global programme on combatting Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fisheries, leading international negotiations and running the Department's large fisheries and marine

research programme. In 2012 Darius became the Executive Secretary of the OSPAR Convention on the protection of the marine environment of the North East Atlantic, where one of his priorities was to improve cooperation between environment and fisheries organisations. Darius took up the post of Secretary of NEAFC in August 2017.



DARIUS CAMPBELL
Secretary
NEAFC

 NEAFC (cont'd)

Meetings & events

The 36th Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) was held in London from 13-17 November 2017.

At the Annual Meeting, conservation and management measures for the year 2018 were adopted for a number of fish stocks. These include blue whiting, herring, mackerel, redfish in the Irminger Sea and Rockall haddock.

NEAFC is progressing further in its work regarding improvements to the conservation and management of deep-sea species. At this Annual Meeting, NEAFC renewed its Recommendation on deep-sea fisheries within the NEAFC Regulatory Area, but in addition agreed a Recommendation to ensure fisheries for deep-sea stocks/species not subject to other conservation and management measures only to expand gradually to allow for information to develop to assess sustainability. Current measures include prohibiting fisheries directed at deep-sea sharks, rays, chimaeras and spurdog, in addition to catch limits being set for several species of grenadiers in two separate areas. Bans on fisheries targeting basking shark and porbeagle remain in effect.

The protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs), such as corals, continues to be an important issue for NEAFC. NEAFC has already closed bottom fisheries in all areas where VMEs are known to occur or are considered likely to occur according to scientific advice. During the meeting NEAFC received the latest scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea regarding the occurrence of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in the Regulatory Area. In response to the

advice, NEAFC has not only extended the current VME closures from the end of 2017 to the end of 2022, but also expanded the coverage of its areas closed to fishing in the Rockall-Hatton Bank. Furthermore it extended the period of the closed areas from the end of 2017 to the end of 2022.

Following the 2014 performance review of NEAFC, working groups related to the Allocation Criteria and the Framework for Coastal State Negotiations were established. Acting on their outputs presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting, NEAFC adopted Guidelines for Coastal States Negotiations in the North East Atlantic and a Model Framework Arrangement.

NEAFC's cooperation with other international organisations was highlighted at the Annual Meeting. This includes the collective arrangement with the OSPAR Commission for the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. The Annual Meeting welcomed the continuing cooperation and coordination between the two organisations, as well as the intention to include other organisations that have international legal competence regarding other activities. NEAFC's good cooperation with several other organisations, including the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) was also welcomed. Continued representation of NEAFC's approaches and achievements at international meetings taking forward global developments on fisheries and oceans governance was encouraged.

The cooperating non-Contracting Party status of the Bahamas, Canada, Liberia, New Zealand and St Kitts and Nevis was renewed for the year 2018. These States cooperate with NEAFC and, in some cases, deploy vessels for transhipment operations in the NEAFC Regulatory Area.



Latest news

NPAFC AIMS TO INVIGORATE HIGH SEAS RESEARCH IN THE NORTH PACIFIC

The North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC), in partnership with the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), continues to work towards an International Year of the Salmon (IYS) (see the NPAFC news in the RSN Newsletter #12, October 2015). Through cooperation and collaboration, the IYS seeks to leave a legacy that includes a well-informed public and community of decision-makers that are better equipped to establish the conditions necessary for salmon and people to be resilient in an uncertain future. In full support for the implementation of the IYS programme, the NPAFC has incorporated all core IYS research themes (status of salmon, salmon in a changing salmosphere, new frontiers, human dimension, and information systems) into the Commission's current Science Plan (2016-2020).

One exciting project proposed in the North Pacific aims to bring salmon research back to the high seas. The proposal is for an intensive, internationally coordinated research program based on the experience of NPAFC member countries in mutually coordinated ship research in the Bering Sea that was gained through BASIS I and II projects in 2002–2008 and 2009–2013, respectively. Large scale winter and summer expeditions utilizing up

to five research vessels deployed simultaneously across the North Pacific Ocean would present an opportunity to make significant progress in the understanding of the marine life history period of Pacific salmon.

Winter remains the least well-studied period of salmon marine life. Many issues of Pacific salmon productivity and survival have been attributed to processes occurring during the wintering period: en route salmon mortality and factors affecting it, carrying capacity, winter survival strategies of different salmon species and different regional stocks, growth and body energy content dynamics, shifting forage areas under climate change, etc. Numerous hypotheses have emerged and remain untested.

The comprehensive sampling program planned for the high seas cruises will give researchers wide-ranging opportunities to collect material and data to inform distributional, biological, trophological, bio-energetic, microchemical and genetic studies of Pacific salmon. In addition, a wide array of data related to the North Pacific high seas ecosystem will be obtained concurrently including oceanological, hydrochemical and synoptic information, data on ecologically related species including zooplankton and micronekton, predatory fish species, etc. Data for abundance estimates of salmon stock recruitment for 3 to 4-year age cohorts of chum and sockeye salmon can then be utilized for the fishery forecasting in subsequent years. Cooperative high seas cruises also represent a tremendous opportunity to collaborate on methods related to fisheries research in the field and for outreach through live-streaming of the exciting work being conducted onboard.



Meetings & events

NPFC RELEVANT MEETINGS IN 2017

The second year of the NPFC Commission was highlighted by activities to facilitate implementation of the Conservation and Management Measures (CMM) adopted by the Commission at its 2nd meeting in 2016. Those include the initial development of a Data Management System; an initial VMS study of existing systems by the Secretariat; the hosting of workshops and working group meetings for assessment of stocks on NPFC's priority species; and support to electronic meetings to advance compliance and CMM initiatives. Two new CMMs - Pacific saury and High Seas Boarding and Inspection Procedures brought Members' attention at the 3rd Commission meeting in 2017 and were adopted to facilitate the Commission move forward with a total of nine CMMs adopted to date, all of which entered into force as of 28 November 2017. Members have developed the first NPFC IUU vessel list and established several new policies and administrative

documents. The Commission welcomed the United States of America and the Republic of Vanuatu as a new Member of the Commission as of 18 February 2017 and 11 June 2017, respectively. A new Secretariat staff, Data Coordinator was recruited on 1 April 2017 and began to work on the Commission's data and information system. The Commission has been represented at meetings of PICES, UN BBNJ Preparatory Committee Meetings, UN SDG14 Conference and NPAFC to have the Commission more involved in cooperative activities with existing organizations. Major outcomes of the official NPFC meetings held in 2017 are presented as below.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The 2nd Scientific Committee (SC) meeting, preceded by three meetings of Small Scientific Committees (SSCs) on vulnerable marine ecosystems (SSC-VME), North Pacific armorhead (SSC-NPA), and Pacific saury (SSC-PS), was held in Shanghai, China during 24-27 April 2017. During the SC meeting, Members reviewed recommendations from SSCs, which were accepted by SC with some amendments and endorsed to the Commission for consideration. The SC recommended to the Commission revisions for Conservation and Management Measures



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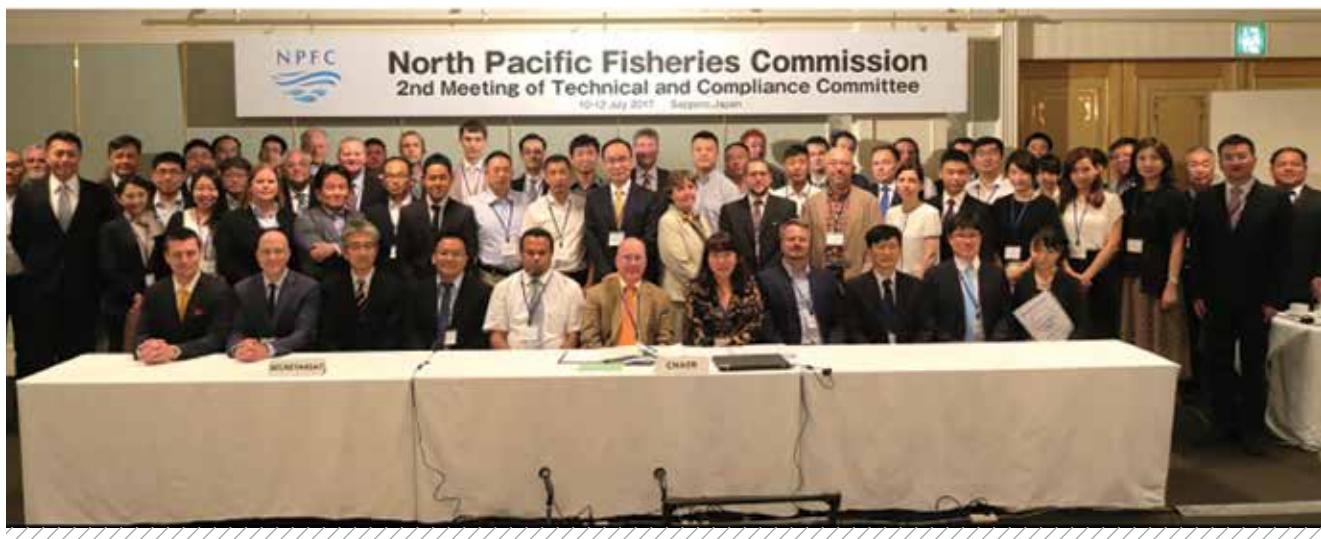
NPFC (cont'd)

(CMM 2016-05 and 06) for bottom fishing and ecosystems in the Northwest and Northeast Pacific Ocean, including possible additional measures for NPA stock, in light of the low levels of NPA catch; adoption of an Adaptive Management process for NPA; broadening the scope of the SSC NPA to encompass bottom fish stocks; establishment of a Technical Working Group on Chub Mackerel (TWG CM) for the purpose of stock assessment; and additional meetings such as VME workshop and meetings of TWG CM and TWG PSSA. The SC also reviewed and endorsed the Research Plan for 2017-2021 and the list of scientific projects for 2017 and subsequent years. Intersessional scientific work would be progressed through Corresponding Groups on data collection templates, on Information Security Guidelines, on the NPFC Observer Program, and Joint NPFC-PICES group.

TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

The 2nd Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) meeting was held in Sapporo, Japan during 10-12 July 2017. Major topics discussed during the meeting included; overview of the fisheries in the

Convention Area, progress in the first stage of VMS study, the outcomes of the TCC Webex preparatory meeting, review of MCS-related issues from SC, compliance work plan and priorities, Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs), the Observer Program. Among the tasks identified by Members at higher priority in terms of urgency, there were assessing compliance, VMS, and vessel registry to be progressed through intersessional electronic works by forming the Small Working Groups (SWG) composed of a focal point of contact of each Member. The meeting reviewed current MCS-related CMMs and endorsed them as edited: CMM on Vessel Registry, IUU fishery, Interim Transshipment Procedures, Vessels with No Nationality, Bottom Fisheries and VME Protection NW Pacific Ocean, Bottom Fisheries and VME Protection NE Pacific Ocean, and CMM on Chub Mackerel, and Pacific saury. The outstanding proposed CMM for high seas boarding and inspection was discussed and endorsed. Finally, the TCC recommended to the Commission that the Commission consider Information Security Guidelines, adopt the Provisional IUU Vessel List.



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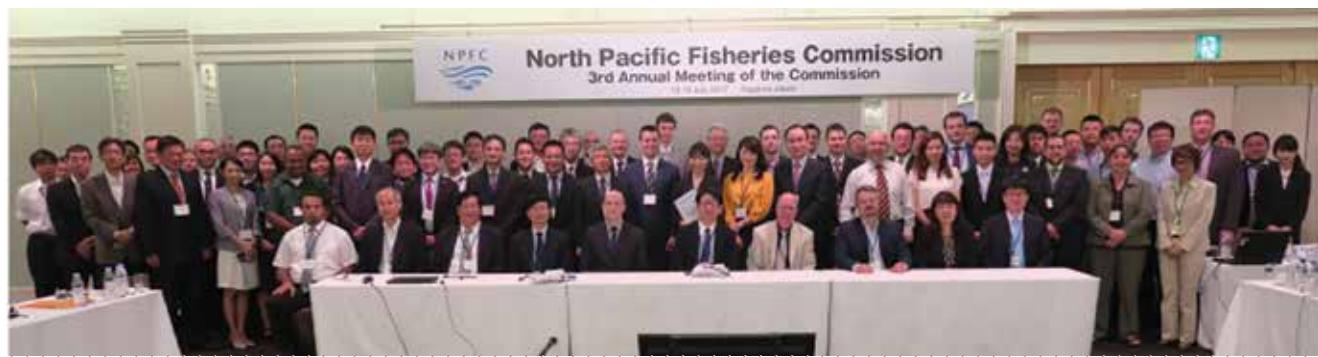
NPFC (cont'd)

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING

The 1st Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) took place in Sapporo, Japan on 12 July 2017 just after the TCC. The meeting reviewed and endorsed the financial status for 2016 and 2017, budget estimates for 2017-2020, special project fund, work plan 2017, NPFC Policy on support to experts, document rules, media access policy, and revised CNCPs, all of which were recommended to the Commission to adopt.

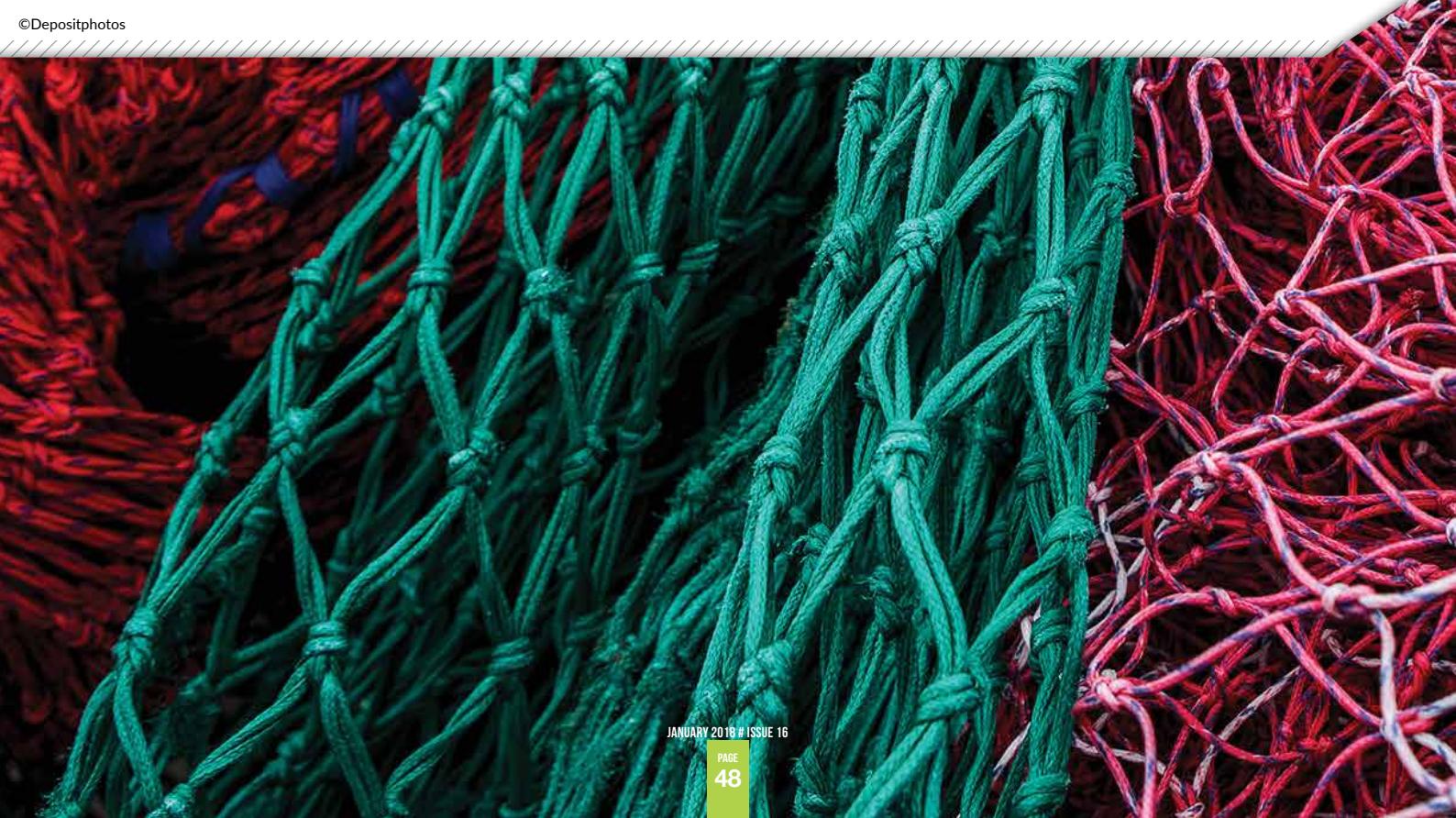
COMMISSION MEETING

The 3rd Commission Meeting of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission was held in Sapporo, Japan from 13-15 July 2017, preceded by the TCC and FAC. The Commission Members discussed and adopted the reports of the SC, TCC and FAC, including the SC Research Plan, the TCC Work Plan and Commission's budget for 2017 and 2018. Four CMMs were revised (CMM on IUU Vessels, two CMMs on Bottom Fisheries and Protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in the Northwestern and Northeastern Pacific Ocean, CMM



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on Chub Mackerel). Two new CMMs: one on Pacific saury, and the second on High Seas Boarding and Inspection Procedures were adopted. Members have developed the first NPFC IUU vessel list. Several new policies and administrative documents have been established; observer status, CNCPs

and Information Security Guidelines. The Members agreed to enhance cooperation with other organizations and to be a co-sponsor for a PICES symposium in 2018.

PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS



→ CWP HANDBOOK

The revision of the Handbook started in 2008 with the main objective to update the "[CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistical Standards](#)" (2004 version), according to the new fishing sector realities and fishing practices. The opportunity has been seized in order to offer the revised handbook contents in a more dynamic and structured way for a navigation across sections more intuitive and easy.



→ STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A REGIONAL FISHERIES OBSERVER PROGRAM IN THE ATLAFCO REGION

This synthesis summarizes the main findings of the study commissioned by ATLAFCO pursuant to the Rabat Declaration on regional cooperation for the fight against IUU fishing adopted by the 9th ATLAFCO Ministerial Conference in September 2014. The terms of reference of this study included a review of the contextual elements and recommendations aiming at developing a Regional Fisheries Observer Program implementing an observer scheme with the following features: common to fulfill all mandatory or voluntary requirements ; single, with an unique mandate approved by all concerned entities ; and permanent to cover all fishing trips of concerned vessels.

Use of fisheries observers as a tool to monitor fishing fleets activities, and as a source of data for scientific purpose is considered in international law, and in particular by the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea and its implementing acts, and by FAO voluntary directives for promotion of responsible fishing practices or international plans of action against IUU fishing.

The Regional Fisheries Observer Program will thus support two essential pillars of fisheries governance through inter-State cooperation promoted by the law of the sea:

7. monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing fleets, with positive effects on the fights against IUU fishing, and
8. improving scientific advice in support of fisheries management through the provision of new data that is currently lacking.



➔ GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN. REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE, ROME, ITALIE, 29-30 JUIN 2017

The Eleventh Session of the Compliance Committee (CoC) was held on 29–30 June 2017 in Rome, Italy. Following the conclusions of the CoC intersessional meeting (January 2017, Italy), the session reviewed the work carried out during the intersessional period and took stock of the progress made in the implementation of Target 3 of the Mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries. Moreover, the session analysed the national reports submitted by the contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties on the status of implementation of decisions adopted by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session (May 2015, Milan) and fortieth session (May/June 2016, Malta) and furthered its deliberations on the ongoing identification and clarification process, including in relation to relevant noncontracting parties. Proposals for new decisions relating to compliance issues expected to be adopted by the Commission at its upcoming session were discussed, including the draft Regional plan of action for the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Important aspects associated to the control of fishing operations, with particular reference to a joint inspection plan for demersal fisheries in the Strait of Sicily, were outlined. The session adopted its work programme for the next intersessional period and elected the new members of the CoC Bureau.

CARD URL: <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/8621c9d2-d4f6-45c3-859f-5c78de5d0529/>



➔ GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN. REPORT OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, SLOVENIA, 16-19 MAY 2017

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) held its nineteenth session in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 16-19 May 2017. The session was attended by delegates from 18 Mediterranean contracting parties and one cooperating non-contracting party, nine observers, representatives of the FAO, including its regional projects, the GFCM Secretariat and invited experts. The Committee reviewed the work carried out during the 2016–2017 intersession, including within its four new subregional subsidiary bodies (Subregional Committee for the Adriatic Sea, Subregional Committee for the Central Mediterranean, Subregional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean and Subregional Committee for the Western Mediterranean) which all met during the intersession. In relation to the recent adoption and launch of the mid-term strategy (2017–2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries, the Committee welcomed the swift launch of multiple priority activities, recognizing that the strategy objectives were ambitious but that related action was necessary. In this respect, it discussed the main activities already launched or foreseen as well as the major issues to be tackled by the GFCM Forum on Fisheries Science (Fish Forum), due to be held at the end of 2018. Furthermore, the Committee formulated advice on the following aspects: i) overall status of Mediterranean stocks; ii) marine environment and ecosystems; and iii) data collection and quality indicators. In line with the subregional approach implemented and based on the conclusions of the four subregional committees, the SAC also provided specific advice for each subregion. At the Mediterranean level, the Committee discussed: i) the indicators of good environmental status; ii) the status of the stocks, in particular European hake; iii) the management of red coral populations (*Corallium rubrum*, L.) and of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*); iv) the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; v) interactions between fisheries and marine environment, including deep-sea fisheries and vulnerable marine ecosystems; and vi) data collection and data quality. At the subregional level, based on the priority species identified for each subregion, specific conclusions were related to the management of i) small pelagic species in the Adriatic Sea, including the establishment of a fisheries restricted area; ii) demersal species in the Strait of Sicily; iii) blackspot seabream in the western Mediterranean; and iv) deep sea fisheries and non-indigenous species in the eastern Mediterranean. In addition, the Committee discussed the implementation of the SAC subregional approach. Finally, the Committee agreed upon its work plan for 2017–2019.

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➔ ICES

Two ICES Techniques in Marine Environmental Sciences (TIMES) issues have been published since August: numbers 60, '[Supporting variables for biological effects measurements in fish and blue mussel](#)' and 61, '[Guidelines for determining polymer-water and polymer-polymer partition coefficients of organic compounds](#)'.

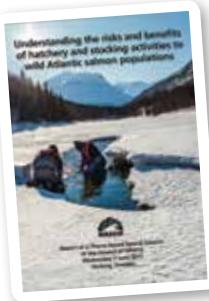
TIMES 60 covers the measurements of biological effects in fish and blue mussels that are fundamental in marine science monitoring. It presents a number of supporting variables such as body weight, shell weight, and condition whose measurement is necessary in order to obtain reliable biological effects data. The report also outlines several confounding factors.

TIMES 61 lays down guidelines for the practice of passive sampling to monitor levels of hydrophobic persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the marine environment. The technique uses simple polymers, which accumulate POPs when exposed to water and are then used to measure concentrations. Presenting passive sampling as an alternative to biota-based water quality monitoring, TIMES 61 provides guidance for measurement of polymer-water partition coefficients, with considerations for quality assurance and control.

Wider science

Fish and shellfish disease received coverage in the form of a [Cooperative Research Report \(CRR\)](#) and an [Identification \(ID\) Leaflet. CRR number 337](#) documents both the status of major diseases and new diseases affecting farmed fish and molluscs in the ICES Area from 2002 to 2015, based on input from the [Working Group on Pathology and Diseases of Marine Organisms \(WGPDMO\)](#). Identification Leaflet number 68, focuses on x-cell disease in common dab.

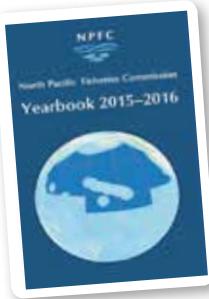
Also available are a number of open-access Editor's Choice articles from [ICES Journal of Marine Science](#). The most recent three of these have covered [an approach to a potential Arctic marine protected area \(MPA\), fisheries connectivity in large marine ecosystems, and monitoring fish choruses for informing of dolphin foraging habitats](#).



➔ **NASCO PRODUCES REPORT ON 'UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF HATCHERY AND STOCKING ACTIVITIES TO WILD ATLANTIC SALMON POPULATIONS'**

The abundance of wild Atlantic salmon is low and declining and some stocks are endangered. In an attempt to discover the main causes of this decline and to determine how best to conserve, restore, and enhance the wild Atlantic salmon stocks, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) has convened theme-based special sessions during its Annual Meeting since 2014. These special sessions are intended to allow for a greater exchange of information and sharing of best practice on a particular topic. Recent analyses have indicated that improvements in the freshwater environment can have a very high benefit to the recovery of salmon and much can be achieved to rebuild stocks without the need for stocking. The topic of the 2017 Theme-based Special Session, therefore, was 'Understanding the risks and benefits of hatchery and stocking activities to wild Atlantic salmon populations'.

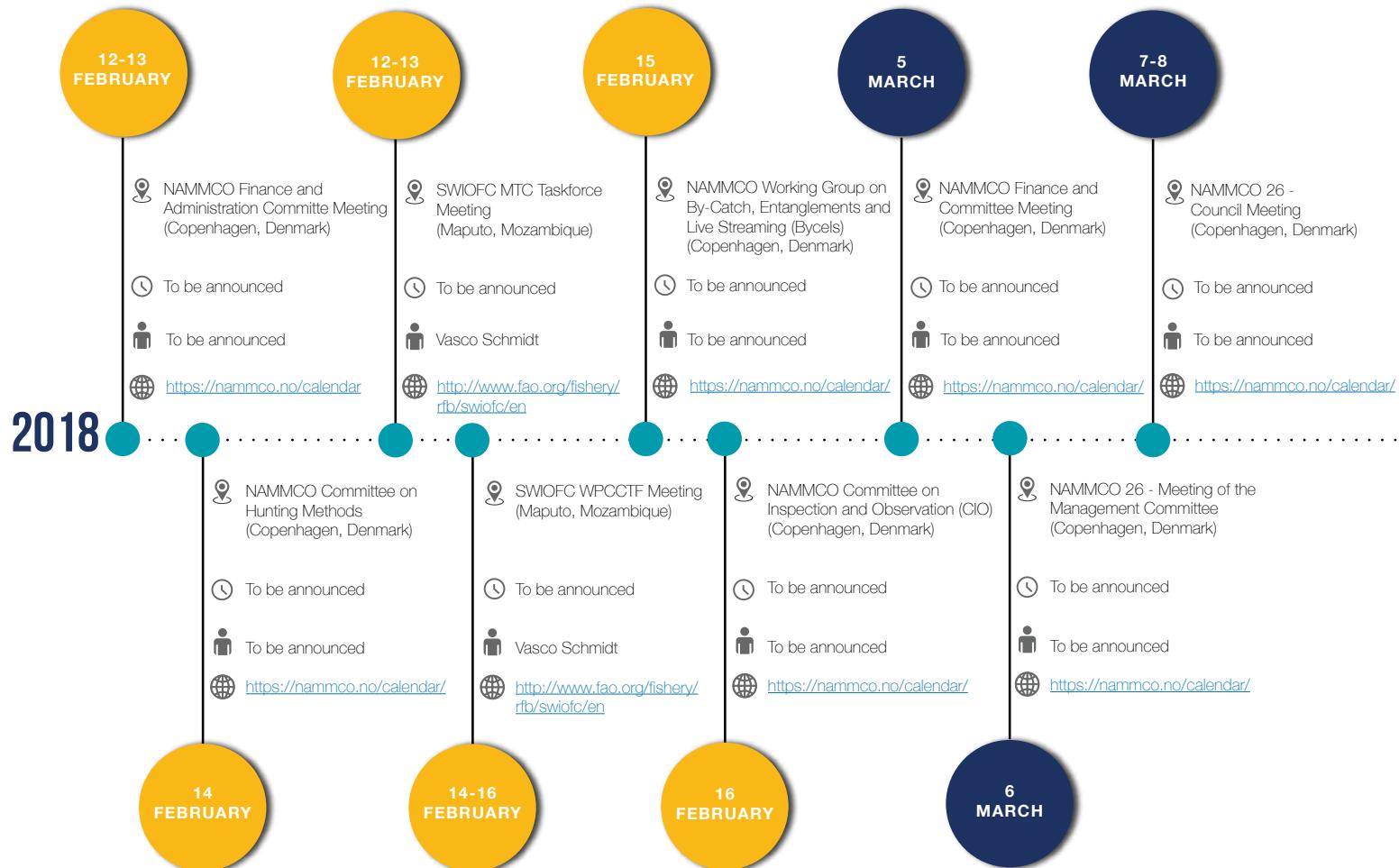
The report of this session can be found at: http://www.nasco.int/pdf/reports_other/2017ThemeBasedSession.pdf.



➔ **NPFC YEARBOOK 2015-2016 (2017), 172PP.**

The purpose of this publication is to record and highlight the results of the key activities and Commission meetings held from the 1st Annual Commission Meeting in September 2015 and all Commission meetings up to and including the 2nd Annual Commission Meeting in August 2016. This yearbook will be published annually.

UPCOMING EVENTS



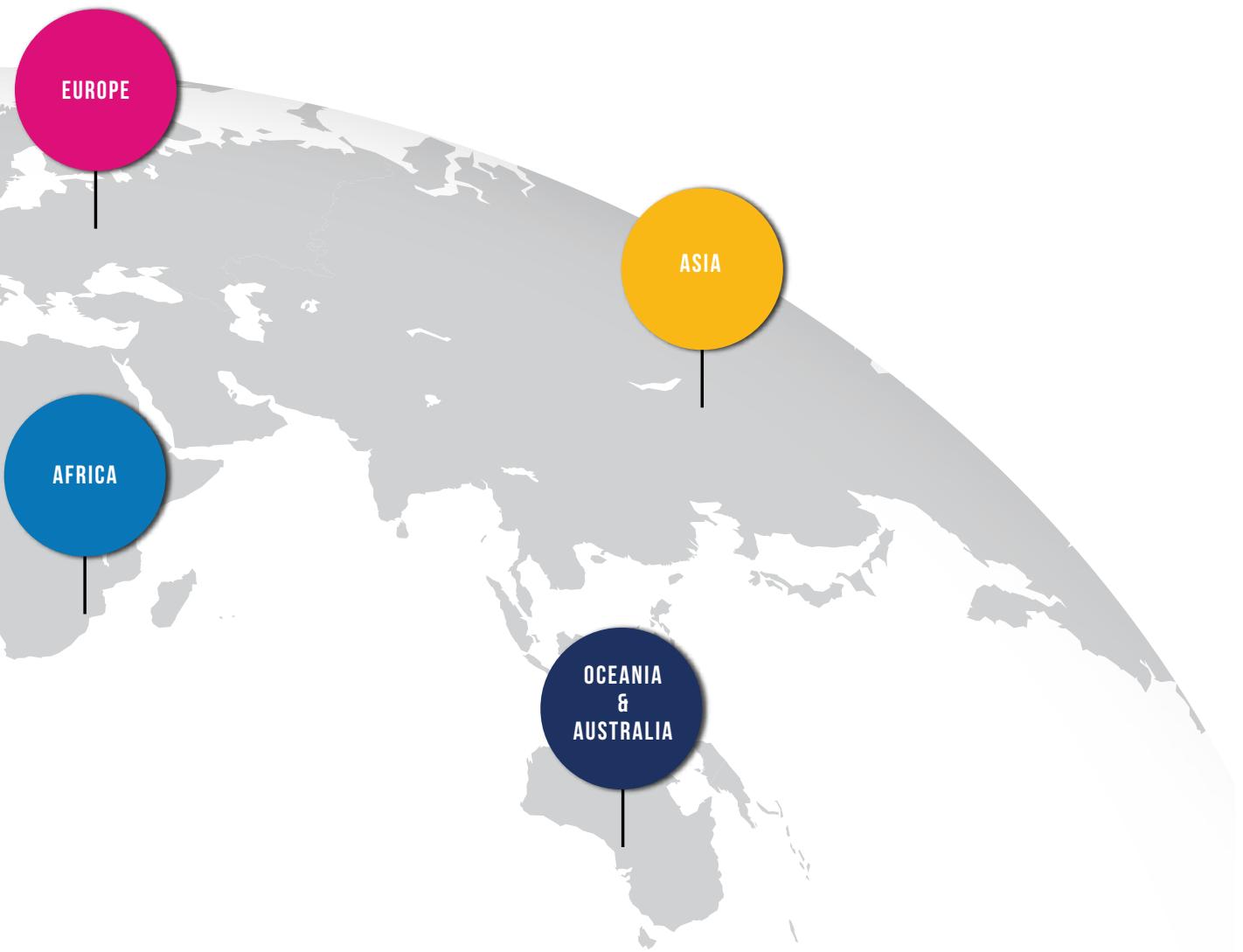


REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES AND NETWORKS



MEMBERS

	ACAP	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
	ACFR	Advisory Committee on Fishery Research
	APFIC	Asia Pacific Fishery Commission
	BCC	Benguela Current Commission
	BOBP-IGO	Bay of Bengal Programme, Intergovernmental Organization
	CACFISH	Central Asia and Caucasus Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission
	CBLT	Lake Chad Basin Commission
	CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
	CCBST	Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea
	CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
	CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
	CIFAA	Committee on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa
	COMHAFAT-ATLAFCO	Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic
	COPESCAALC	Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean
	COREP	Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea
	CCPS	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific
	CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
	CTMF	Joint Technical Commission for the Argentina/Uruguay Maritime Front
	CWP	Coordinated Working Party on Fishery Statistics
	EIFAC	European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission
	FCWC	Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
	FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
	FIRMS	Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System
	GCLME	Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem
	GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection; IMO, International Maritime Organization
	GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
	GLFC	Great Lakes Fisheries Commission
	IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
	ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
	ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
	IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
	IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission



MEMBERS

	IWC	International Whaling Commission
	JOINTFISH	Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission
	LTA	Lake Tanganyika Authority
	LVFO	Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
	MRC	Mekong River Commission
	NACA	Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific
	NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries
	NAMMCO	North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission
	NASCO	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
	NEAFC	North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
	NPACF	North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission
	NPFC	North Pacific Fisheries Commission
	OLDEPESCA	Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development
	OSPESCA	Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization
	PISCES	The North Pacific Marine Science Organization
	PSC	Pacific Salmon Commission
	RAA	Red de Acuicultura de las Americas
	RECOFI	Regional Commission for Fisheries
	SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
	SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization
	SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	SPO	South Pacific Regional Fishery Management Organisation
	SPRFMO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
	SRFC	Subregional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)
	SWIOFC	Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
	WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
	WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission

This newsletter is developed by the RSN Secretariat, with the precious and voluntary contributions of secretariats of regional fisheries bodies and regional fisheries management organizations, as well as colleagues from FAO and other agencies working on matters relevant to these bodies.

The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO hosts and provides the RSN Secretariat services, the venue for biennial meetings, and has a day-to-day collaboration with the network on technical and operational issues. In this context, the Secretariat will continue working with its members, partners and colleagues, to ensure as much as possible, that voices and experiences from different regions are being considered.

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In the previous issue:

- Strengthening and promoting the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network.
- UN Ocean Conference to Support Implementation of SDG 14 – Life Below Water.
- SSF Corner.



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GET IN TOUCH



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