

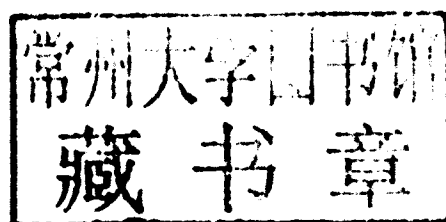
Report of the

**SIXTH SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION
FOR FISHERIES**

Rome, 10–12 May 2011



Report of the
SIXTH SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES
Rome, 10–12 May 2011



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of FAO.

ISBN 978-92-5-007016-2

All rights reserved. FAO encourages reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Non-commercial uses will be authorized free of charge, upon request. Reproduction for resale or other commercial purposes, including educational purposes, may incur fees. Applications for permission to reproduce or disseminate FAO copyright materials, and all queries concerning rights and licences, should be addressed by e-mail to copyright@fao.org or to the Chief, Publishing Policy and Support Branch, Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy.

© FAO 2011

الأوصاف المستخدمة في هذه المواد الإعلامية وطريقة عرضها لا تعبر عن أي رأي خاص لمنظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة في ما يتعلق بالوضع القانوني أو التنموي لأي بلد أو إقليم أو مدينة أو منطقة، أو في ما يتعلق بسلطاتها أو بتعيين حدودها وتخومها. ولا تعبر الإشارة إلى شركات محددة أو منتجات بعض المصنعين، سواء كانت مرخصة أم لا، عن دعم أو توصية من جانب منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة أو تفضيلها على مثيلاتها مما لم يرد ذكره.

تمثل وجهات النظر الواردة في هذه المواد الإعلامية الرؤية الشخصية للمؤلف (المؤلفين)، ولا تعكس بأي حال وجهات نظر منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة.

ISBN 978-92-5-007016-2

جميع حقوق الطبع محفوظة. وإن منظمة الأغذية والزراعة تشجّع نسخ ونشر المواد الإعلامية الواردة في هذا المطبوع. ويجوز عند الطلب استخدامه مجاناً لغير الأغراض التجارية. وقد يتوجب دفع رسوم مالية لقاء نسخه بغرض إعادة بيعه أو لأغراض تجارية أخرى، بما في ذلك للأغراض التعليمية. وتقدم طلبات الحصول على إذن بنسخ أو نشر منتجات المنظمة المحمية بموجب حقوق الطبع وغيرها من استفسارات عن الحقوق والتراخيص بالكتابة على عنوان البريد الإلكتروني : copyright@fao.org أو

إلى :

Chief

Publishing Policy and Support Branch
Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension
FAO

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy

© FAO 2011

The sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 12 May 2011. The Commission reviewed a range of regional issues and intersessional activities of importance to the conservation and management of fisheries and aquaculture. Members considered and endorsed the administrative and financial reports, and endorsed the findings and outcomes of the Special Meeting on RECOFI Consolidation and Development, including the technical review of RECOFI. The Commission noted the significant FAO Regular Programme contributions to support RECOFI's work and that capacity development remained a critical issue in the region. The Commission discussed the report of the Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA), including the fifth meeting of the WGA and the Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS). The report of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) was addressed, as well as the outcome of the third and fourth meetings of the WGFM, stock status reporting and review of capture fisheries statistics, and unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the region. The Commission agreed to adopt the FAO/RECOFI joint WGA and WGFM regional strategy on spatial planning for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture and, within available resources, to provide the necessary support for follow-up action for the strategy's implementation. The Commission adopted its first fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area and agreed that the recommendation would take effect on 1 January 2012. The Commission agreed on a threefold increase of the Members' annual contributions from 2013 provided that all arrears were liquidated by 31 December 2011. The Commission discussed and approved the programme of work for the WGA and the WGFM. In considering the programme of work and budget for the 2011–2012 biennium, the Commission approved nine activities for implementation. A further eleven activities were postponed for financial reasons. The Commission reconfirmed that the seventh session of RECOFI would be held in Iran (Islamic Republic of) in May 2013.

ISBN 978-92-5-007016-2 ISSN 2070-6987



9 789250 070162

I2377BI/1/09.11

PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report of the sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) held in Rome, from 10 to 12 May 2011.

FAO. Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa.
Report of the sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries. Rome,
10–12 May 2011.
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 982. Rome, FAO. 2011. 46 pp.
[Bilingual version English/Arabic]

ABSTRACT

The sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 12 May 2011. The Commission reviewed a range of regional issues and intersessional activities of importance to the conservation and management of fisheries and aquaculture. Members considered and endorsed the administrative and financial reports, and endorsed the findings and outcomes of the Special Meeting on RECOFI Consolidation and Development including the technical review of RECOFI. The Commission noted the significant FAO Regular Programme contributions to support RECOFI's work and that capacity development remained a critical issue in the region. The Commission discussed the report of the Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA), including the fifth meeting of the WGA and the Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS). The report of the Working Group on Fisheries Management (WGFM) was addressed, as well as the the outcome of the third and fourth meetings of the WGFM, stock status reporting and review of capture fisheries statistics, and unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the region. The Commission agreed to adopt the FAO/RECOFI joint WGA and WGFM regional strategy on spatial planning for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture and, within available resources, to provide the necessary support for follow-up action for the strategy's implementation. The Commission adopted its first fisheries management recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area and agreed that the recommendation would take effect on 1 January 2012. The Commission agreed on a threefold increase of the Members' annual contributions from 2013 provided that all arrears were liquidated by 31 December 2011. The Commission discussed and approved the programme of work for the WGA and the WGFM. In considering the programme of work and budget for the 2011–2012 biennium, the Commission approved nine activities for implementation. A further eleven activities were postponed for financial reasons. The Commission reconfirmed that the seventh session of RECOFI would be held in the Islamic Republic of Iran in May 2013.

عقدت الدورة السادسة للهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك (الهيئة) في روما، إيطاليا خلال الفترة 10-12 مايو/أيار 2011. وقد استعرضت الهيئة عدداً من القضايا الإقليمية وأنشطة ما بين الدورات، ذات الأهمية لصيانة وإدارة مصايد الأسماك وتربية الأحياء المائية. كما قام أعضاء الهيئة بدراسة وإقرار التقارير الإدارية والمالية، وصادقوا على نتائج ومتحصلات الاجتماع الخاص بشأن تدعيم وتطوير الهيئة بما يشمل المراجعة التقنية للهيئة. كما انتبهت الهيئة إلى المساهمات الجوهرية للبرنامج العادي لمنظمة الأغذية والزراعة (المنظمة) في دعم أعمالها، وإلى أن تنمية القدرات ما تزال قضية حرجة بالإقليم. كما ناقشت الهيئة تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية بما في ذلك الاجتماع الخامس لهذه المجموعة، والنظام الإقليمي لمعلومات تربية الأحياء المائية. وقد جرى عرض تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك بما في ذلك نتائج الاجتماعين الثالث والرابع لمجموعة العمل المذكورة، ووضع الإخطار عن الرصيد السمكي، واستعراض إحصائيات الكميات المصادة، والصيد غير القانوني دون إبلاغ ودون تنظيم بالإقليم. ووافقت الهيئة على تطبيق الإستراتيجية الإقليمية التي وضعتها مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية ومجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك في الاجتماع المشترك بين المنظمة والهيئة بشأن التخطيط المكاني لمصايد الأسماك البحرية الطبيعية وتربية الأحياء المائية، وأن تقدم الدعم اللازم، في حدود الموارد المتاحة، لمتابعة العمل من أجل تنفيذ الإستراتيجية. وقد أقرت الهيئة أول توصية بالاستراتيجية عن إدارة مصايد الأسماك بشأن الحد الأدنى للبيانات المطلوب الإبلاغ عنها بمنطقة اختصاصها، ووافقت على وضع هذه التوصية موضع التنفيذ في أول يناير/كانون الثاني 2012. كذلك وافقت الهيئة على زيادة المشاركة السنوية للبلدان الأعضاء إلى ثلاث أضعاف المشاركة الحالية اعتباراً من عام 2013، بشرط سداد كافة المتأخرات بحلول 31 ديسمبر/كانون الأول 2011. وقد ناقشت الهيئة ووافقت على برنامج عمل كلا من مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية ومجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك. وفي ظل برنامج العمل والميزانية لحقبة العامين 2011 - 2012 أقرت الهيئة تنفيذ تسعة أنشطة. وتم تأجيل أحد عشر نشاطاً آخر لأسباب مالية. وقد أعادت الهيئة التأكيد على أن دورتها السابعة سوف تعقد في جمهورية إيران الإسلامية خلال شهر مايو/أيار 2013.



تقرير الدورة السادسة
للهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك
روما، 10-12 مايو/أيار 2011

منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة
المكتب الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى وشمال أفريقيا
روما، 2011

إعداد هذا التقرير

تعد هذه النسخة النهائية من التقرير المعتمد للدورة السادسة للهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك (الهيئة) والتي عقدت في روما في الفترة من 10 إلى 12 مايو/أيار 2011.

منظمة الأغذية والزراعة. المكتب الإقليمي للشرق الأدنى وشمال أفريقيا.

تقرير الدورة السادسة للهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك. روما، 10-12 مايو/أيار 2011.

تقرير المنظمة عن مصايد الأسماك وتربية الأحياء المائية رقم 982. روما، منظمة الأغذية والزراعة. 2011. 46 صفحة. (نسخة عربية/إنجليزية).

ملخص

عقدت الدورة السادسة للهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك (الهيئة) في روما، إيطاليا خلال الفترة 10-12 مايو/أيار 2011. وقد استعرضت الهيئة عدداً من القضايا الإقليمية وأنشطة ما بين الدورات، ذات الأهمية لصيانة وإدارة مصايد الأسماك وتربية الأحياء المائية. كما قام أعضاء الهيئة بدراسة وإقرار التقارير الإدارية والمالية، وصادقوا على نتائج ومتحصلات الاجتماع الخاص بشأن تدعيم وتطوير الهيئة بما يشمل المراجعة التقنية للهيئة. كما انتبهت الهيئة إلى المساهمات الجوهرية للبرنامج العادي لمنظمة الأغذية والزراعة (المنظمة) في دعم أعمالها، وإلى أن تنمية القدرات ما تزال قضية حرجية بالإقليم. كما ناقشت الهيئة تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية بما في ذلك الاجتماع الخامس لهذه المجموعة، والنظام الإقليمي لمعلومات تربية الأحياء المائية.

وقد جرى عرض تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك بما في ذلك نتائج الاجتماعين الثالث والرابع لمجموعة العمل المذكورة، ووضع الإخطار عن الرصيد السمكي، واستعراض إحصائيات الكميات المصادة، والصيد غير القانوني دون إبلاغ ودون تنظيم بالإقليم. ووافقت الهيئة على تطبيق الإستراتيجية الإقليمية التي وضعتها مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية ومجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك في الاجتماع المشترك بين المنظمة والهيئة بشأن التخطيط المكاني لمصايد الأسماك البحرية الطبيعية وتربية الأحياء المائية، وأن تقدم الدعم اللازم، في حدود الموارد المتاحة، لمتابعة العمل من أجل تنفيذ الإستراتيجية. وقد أقرت الهيئة أول توصية بالاستراتيجية عن إدارة مصايد الأسماك بشأن الحد الأدنى للبيانات المطلوب الإبلاغ عنها بمنطقة اختصاصها، ووافقت على وضع هذه التوصية موضع التنفيذ في أول يناير/كانون الثاني 2012. كذلك وافقت الهيئة على زيادة المشاركة السنوية للبلدان الأعضاء إلى ثلاث أضعاف المشاركة الحالية اعتباراً من عام 2013، بشرط سداد كافة المتأخرات بحلول 31 ديسمبر/كانون الأول 2011. وقد ناقشت الهيئة ووافقت على برنامج عمل كلا من مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية ومجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك. وفي ظل برنامج العمل والميزانية لحقبة العامين 2011 - 2012 أقرت الهيئة تنفيذ تسعة أنشطة. وتم تأجيل أحد عشر نشاطاً آخر لأسباب مالية. وقد أعادت الهيئة التأكيد على أن دورتها السابعة سوف تعقد في جمهورية إيران الإسلامية خلال شهر مايو/أيار 2013.

CONTENTS

OPENING OF THE SESSION	1
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION.....	1
REVIEW OF THE INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EMERGING ISSUES OF REGIONAL RELEVANCE.....	1
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORTS.....	2
REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON AQUACULTURE	3
OUTCOME OF THE FAO/RECOFI JOINT WGA AND WGFM WORKSHOP ON SPATIAL PLANNING FOR MARINE CAPTURE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, INCLUDING THE REGIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND ADOPTION OF THE STRATEGY	4
REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT.....	4
RECOFI CONSOLIDATION AND DEVELOPMENT	6
PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COOPERATION IN THE NORTHERN AREA OF RECOFI.....	7
PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2011–2012.....	7
ANY OTHER MATTERS	7
DATE AND PLACE OF THE SEVENTH SESSION.....	8
ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	8

APPENDIXES

A.	Agenda	9
B.	List of participants	10
C.	List of documents.....	14
D.	Opening statement by Mr Ární M. Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department	16
E.	Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1 on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area... ..	18
F.	RECOFI activities to be undertaken in the 2011–2012 intersessional period.....	22

جدول المحتويات

صفحة

افتتاح الدورة.....	1
اعتماد جدول الأعمال وترتيبات الدورة.....	1
تقرير عن أنشطة ما بين الدورات، بما في ذلك المسائل الناشئة التي لها أهميتها في المنطقة.....	1
التقارير الإدارية والمالية.....	2
تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية.....	2
نتائج حلقة العمل بين مجموعة العمل المعنية بتربية الأحياء المائية ومجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك المشتركة بين المنظمة والهيئة، بشأن التخطيط المكاني لمصايد الأسماك البحرية الطبيعية وتربية الأحياء المائية، بما في ذلك البرنامج الإقليمي لتطوير التخطيط المكاني وتطبيق الإستراتيجية.....	3
تقرير مجموعة العمل المعنية بإدارة مصايد الأسماك.....	4
تدعيم وتطوير الهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك.....	6
التقدم في تنفيذ مبادرة التعاون في إدارة مصايد المنطقة الشمالية الواقعة في اختصاص الهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك.....	7
برنامج العمل والميزانية للفترة المالية 2011-2012.....	7
أية مسائل أخرى.....	7
موعد ومكان انعقاد الدورة السابعة.....	8
إعتماد التقرير.....	8

المرفقات

أ جدول الأعمال.....	9
ب قائمة المشاركين (أنظر الملحق باللغة الانجليزية).....	10
ج قائمة الوثائق.....	11
د كلمة الافتتاح بواسطة السيد أرني م. متيسن (Árni M. Mathiesen) المدير العام المساعد لإدارة مصايد الأسماك وتربية الأحياء المائية.....	13
هـ التوصية RECOFI/6/2001/1 بشأن الحد الأدنى للبيانات المطلوب الإبلاغ عنها بمنطقة عمل الهيئة الإقليمية لمصايد الأسماك.....	15
و الأنشطة التي ستقوم بها الهيئة في الفترة 2011-2012 فيما بين الدورتين.....	19

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The sixth session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) was called to order by the Commission's Secretary, Mr Piero Mannini, Senior Fishery Officer, Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Cairo, Egypt. He welcomed delegates to the meeting, adding that he was confident that it would be a very successful session. The session was attended by all RECOFI Members. The list of participants and observers is in Appendix B.

2. Mr Lahsen Ababouch, Chief, Products, Trade and Marketing Service, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, FAO, Rome, Italy, made a statement on behalf of the Assistant Director-General for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Mr Árni M. Mathiesen. He recalled the complex, semi-enclosed nature of the RECOFI area and the region's important shared resources. He stressed the critical role and function of the Commission in facilitating and promoting regional cooperation in fisheries. Mr Ababouch highlighted the need for RECOFI and its Secretariat to reinforce collaboration among Members. He recalled that the Commission had carried out a technical performance review in 2010 and congratulated RECOFI Members for the progress they had achieved implementing projects. In conclusion, Mr Ababouch reminded the Commission that the recommendations adopted at this session would be crucial for RECOFI's future work and, in particular, for the sustainability of resources in the region. The text of his statement is in Appendix D.

3. The Secretary advised the Commission that the outgoing Chairperson, Mr Abdulrazzaq Abdulla, Adviser to the Assistant Deputy Minister for Fisheries, Ministry of Environment and Water, United Arab Emirates, was unable to attend the session. The Commission elected Mr Abdulredha J. Shams, Director, Directorate of Marine Resources, General Directorate for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wild Life, Manama, Bahrain, as Chairperson. The Islamic Republic of Iran was elected Vice-Chairperson.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

4. The Commission adopted the Agenda, and it is in Appendix A. The list of documents before the session is in Appendix C.

REVIEW OF THE INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EMERGING ISSUES OF REGIONAL RELEVANCE

5. The Commission encouraged Members to contribute actively to regional deliberations, exchange of information and RECOFI's work. It was recognized that regional dialogue had been facilitated through Commission activities that had helped Members identify national and regional actions required to move forward with the adoption of regulations and policies to support the sustainable management of shared fisheries resources and the development of the aquaculture sector.

6. The Commission noted that some important commercial fisheries in the area were being overexploited and that overfishing remained a concern in the Gulf. However, it was further noted that revised and new regulations were being issued by some Members that could eventually bring about a reduction in fishing effort. In this regard, the Commission agreed to strengthen cooperation and common agreements among Members.

7. The Commission highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and promoting better communication and cooperation with other regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, in relation to highly migratory species (e.g. tunas and tuna-like species and other large pelagics such as sharks). It was also pointed out that illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing remained a major concern in the region to securing long-term sustainability.

8. The Commission agreed that capacity development remained essential to enable fisheries personnel to promote policies aimed at facilitating long-term sustainability, including the adoption of the ecosystem approach to fisheries.

9. In terms of aquaculture development, the Commission agreed that the promotion of this sector remained a challenge and its strategic importance for securing additional seafood supplies for both regional consumption and export markets was stressed. The Commission recognized that the physical environment of the RECOFI area posed a number of technical difficulties in the development of marine- and land-based aquaculture.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

10. The Commission noted the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to support the work of the Commission. These activities included those intended to implement initiatives and projects endorsed by RECOFI as well as activities to coordinate with other organizations. In addition, the Commission noted the Secretariat's efforts to promote RECOFI work and to raise its profile.

11. The Commission welcomed the comprehensive financial report concerning RECOFI's work over the 2009–2010 biennium. Members noted with satisfaction that the balance of accumulated pending contributions against the 2009–2010 RECOFI fiscal years, as at 31 December 2010, amounted to USD 35 135. This represented a 61 percent decrease compared with the previous biennium.

12. With respect to the Commission's financial situation, it was agreed that Members should pay their contributions in a timely manner if RECOFI's work was to proceed as scheduled. Contributions that were paid late would delay or cause the postponement of activities and this was not desirable. The Commission noted the significant FAO Regular Programme contributions to support RECOFI's work and the Secretariat's efforts to secure extrabudgetary funding. In particular, the Secretariat noted its contact with the Islamic Development Bank and the potential to secure funds from this source to support field projects. However, the Secretariat advised Members that they would need to coordinate and support the Secretariat's requests from this institution.

13. After considerable discussion, the Commission agreed to cancel the aquaculture legal and policy framework project. The delegate from the United Arab Emirates indicated that, following an official communication from the Secretariat, its contribution should be transferred to RECOFI's general fund to settle current and outstanding contributions. It was further agreed that the Secretariat would forward a letter to Saudi Arabia to enquire what should be done with its contribution of USD 22 500 to the project.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON AQUACULTURE

Fifth meeting of the Working Group on Aquaculture

14. In addressing the work of the RECOFI Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA), the Commission noted the issues raised for consideration, stressing the strategic importance of the aquaculture sector in the region. It acknowledged the importance of regional collaboration among RECOFI Members through the WGA to ensure that common developmental issues and challenges could be addressed through the sharing of information.

15. The Commission noted the development opportunities for aquaculture in the RECOFI region, underlining the need for aquaculture to be promoted in a responsible and sustainable manner.

Regional Aquaculture Information System: system performance and follow-up

16. The Commission recognized that the establishment of the Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS) was a significant accomplishment of the WGA. It had been achieved with extrabudgetary funding provided by Kuwait. RECOFI agreed that a stronger commitment to the administration and operation of the information system was vital and additional efforts were required for the system to function more effectively as a regional information-sharing platform and data-repository system for both national administrations and the private sector.

17. The Commission further recognized that limited data entry, insufficient validation of data submitted, poor communication among RAIS authorized users, and poor promotion at the national and regional levels were the main reasons for the relatively low visibility and use of the system. To address these issues, the Commission recommended that the WGA Focal Points ensure efficient national data collection and timely data entry and validation.

18. At its next meeting, the Commission recommended that the WGA discuss the possibility of restyling the RAIS site by adding new features to make it more attractive, particularly for private-sector users. However, RECOFI recognized that the new format for the information system should be finalized only after all Members had consolidated the routine data entry and information flows. The Commission noted that additional resources should be allocated to support this work. The Commission also proposed that the original scope of RAIS be expanded to include information on capture fisheries.

19. The Commission agreed that additional training on RAIS functions and operations should be provided to the Focal Points, as required, to strengthen their capabilities to manage the system.

20. The Commission also agreed that the next WGA meeting should include one day to enable Members additional time to consider RAIS, including its capacity development requirements.

OUTCOME OF THE FAO/RECOFI JOINT WGA AND WGFM WORKSHOP ON SPATIAL PLANNING FOR MARINE CAPTURE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, INCLUDING THE REGIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND ADOPTION OF THE STRATEGY

21. The Commission highlighted the need to ensure the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity, and underscored the need for RECOFI Members to work cooperatively among themselves and with other marine water users.
22. The Commission recognized that the seawaters in the RECOFI area should be used for a variety of activities in a sustainable manner, that fish stocks did not recognize anthropogenic boundaries, and that the limited RECOFI spatial area should be managed cooperatively.
23. The Commission emphasized that multisectoral management, as in the case of the proposed regional strategy, should be part of an ecosystem-based management framework that inspired and instigated planning and decision-making processes at all levels, including socio-economic and institutional aspects.
24. The Commission further recognized that spatial planning tools, data and know-how already existed to potentially assist RECOFI Members conduct spatial analysis for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture planning, but acknowledged that there was a need for improved coordination among RECOFI Members. There was also consensus by the Commission that there was a long-term need for spatial planning tools in the RECOFI region.
25. The Commission agreed that early detection and monitoring of harmful algal blooms, pollutants and diseases were the main spatially related problems identified for aquaculture. RECOFI noted that remote sensing products were being used in the region to provide identification and tracking of harmful algal blooms to improve spatial and temporal risk assessment for operational management of mariculture. This work should be undertaken in cooperation with the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) and the Secretariat should ensure appropriate follow-up.
26. The Commission noted that mariculture development in the region was at very different stages among RECOFI Members and that spatial planning would have to cater for individual needs in each country. The Commission underscored the necessity for improving the availability of information on spatial planning among RECOFI Members.
27. The Commission agreed to adopt the FAO/RECOFI joint WGA and WGFM regional strategy on spatial planning for marine capture fisheries and aquaculture and, within available resources, to provide the necessary support for follow-up action for the strategy's implementation.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Stock status reporting and review of capture fisheries statistics in the RECOFI region

28. The Commission agreed that catch data alone were inadequate to interpret correctly trends and status of fish stocks and confirmed the urgent need to overcome the current data inadequacy. The Commission noted that the data and information required to obtain stock

indicators as well as survey and assessment results existed in the region. It was also noted that a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) project to assess demersal stock biomass with acoustic, bottom trawling and wire-trap surveys was ongoing, and the Commission underscored the importance of enhancing RECOFI's capacity to share such data and information. The Commission agreed that the modification of the data-collection system would benefit Members because they would be able to obtain a clearer indication of fishery stock status in the region. The Commission emphasized that routine evaluation of problems and data validation, together with fine-tuning of methods and procedures, were required to enhance data systems as a firm basis for management.

29. Despite the inadequacy of existing catch data as stock indicators, the Commission expressed grave concern at the current catch declines of certain species. In addition to biodiversity loss, concern was also expressed at the increased utilization of marine areas and coastal zones by multiple sectors and environmental degradation from harmful sea- and land-based activities. Furthermore, it was recognized that information about the potential relationships among different species and species groups was poor and work to obtain a better understanding of these relationships was required.

30. The Commission considered the potential benefits of a scientific expert group that would review and analyse the fisheries situation in the region to provide advice to the Commission so that it would have a solid base for its decisions in fulfilment of RECOFI's mandate.

Third and Fourth meeting of the WGFM and Special Meeting

31. The Commission recognized the need for effective and cooperative fisheries management in the region, noting that the two meetings of the WGFM since the last RECOFI session in 2009 had addressed issues and activities necessary for sound fisheries management.

32. The Commission adopted the Recommendation RECOFI/6/2011/1 entitled "Recommendation on minimum data reporting in the RECOFI area." It is in Appendix E. In accordance with Article V of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Regional Commission for Fisheries, the Commission agreed that the recommendation would take effect on 1 January 2012.

33. The Commission endorsed the list of prioritized projects proposed by the WGFM.¹

34. The Commission agreed that the WGFM should meet annually maintaining the current October schedule.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the RECOFI region: establishment of a database of violations

35. The Commission acknowledged that IUU fishing occurred in all fisheries irrespective of their locations, gear types and scale of operations. IUU fishing was perpetuated by authorized and unauthorized fishers, and their activities undermined efforts to manage fisheries in a long-term sustainable manner.

¹ RECOFI/VI/2011/6 (Appendix 3).

36. Following extensive debate concerning the proposal by Oman to conduct a feasibility study to review the development of regional databases for violations, establishing a list of vessels authorized to fish by Members and the establishment of a monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) exchange scheme, RECOFI was unable to reach a consensus on whether the study should proceed. As a compromise, the Commission agreed to an alternative proposal by Oman that: (i) the matter be revisited at the next meeting of the WGFM; (ii) the concept for the study be modified to incorporate, as a first step, preliminary assessments by Members of the extent of IUU fishing in their respective national jurisdiction; and (iii) a framework for future work related to IUU fishing, and how it should be addressed, should be elaborated for consideration and adoption by the Commission.

RECOFI CONSOLIDATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Technical review of RECOFI and country response to the preliminary findings on the operations of the Commission

37. The Commission acknowledged that the analysis of the results of the survey in relation to the technical recommendations of the report on RECOFI's Consolidation and Development would guide Members to contribute more effectively to the Commission's inputs and decisions. The survey results highlighted the Members expectations about the Commission. They suggested that this type of survey should be carried out on a regular basis.

38. The Commission noted that the survey covered issues concerning its overall performance. This reflected positively on the commitment and past performance of Focal Points. The Commission agreed that there was a need to address the modalities through which Focal Points were selected and to ensure that they were supported institutionally. Furthermore, proper communication channels needed to be established to ensure that relevant national authorities were aware of RECOFI's work and could contribute or act upon information if required.

Special meeting on RECOFI consolidation and development: outcome and options

39. The Commission endorsed the findings and outcomes of the Special Meeting on RECOFI Consolidation and Development (Rome, 11–12 May 2010).

40. The Commission agreed that many fisheries management and developmental challenges faced RECOFI. Members were calling upon the Commission more frequently to undertake additional work and, for this reason, it was necessary to reconsider the annual contributions paid. In addition, a RECOFI scientific working group was mentioned. It was also agreed that the Secretariat would communicate with the WGA and WGFM Chairpersons to prepare a paper for consideration by the Commission at their next sessions.

41. The Commission agreed that the current level of Members' contributions was only sufficient to fund the implementation of a limited number of priority activities, as identified by the WGA and WGFM. Additional funds would be required if a more ambitious work programme was to be implemented.

42. In considering options proposed by the review to consolidate and develop RECOFI, the Commission agreed to continue applying fixed and equal contribution for Members.