

Report of the thirtieth session of the

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Rome, 9–13 July 2012



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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report as approved by the thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries held in Rome from 9 to 13 July 2012.

FAO.

Report of the thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries. Rome, 9–13 July 2012.

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ABSTRACT

The thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 9 to 13 July 2012. The Committee reviewed the issues of an international character and the FAO programme in fisheries and aquaculture, and their implementation. The Committee, while stressing the high value of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture as a flagship publication, recommended that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control, as well as consider a simpler classification of stock status. The Committee expressed strong support for the standards and norms of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments and agreed on further effort to facilitate their accessibility and more effective implementation. The Committee agreed on the development of best practice guidelines for traceability. The Committee reiterated its support to FAO's collaboration with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the World Trade Organization. The Committee reiterated the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States. The Committee requested FAO to develop a conformity assessment framework for aquaculture certification guidelines as well as a draft strategy paper including a long-term strategic plan for the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and emphasized the specific needs for future work. The Committee urged FAO to reinforce its emphasis on fish as food, ensure that these aspects were not lost in the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management, and assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance. The Committee requested FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess possible threats arising from their development. The Committee called for continuous consultation with all stakeholders in the development of the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and agreed on the need to develop implementation strategies for the Guidelines. The Committee agreed that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem adversely impacting on sustainable fisheries and food security. The Committee endorsed the terms of reference for the Ad hoc Working Group for the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures. The Committee requested to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation on the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance. The Committee reiterated its support for the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels. The Committee agreed that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners in better coordination and urged FAO to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives. The Committee adopted the revised Rules of Procedure and endorsed the related changes in current practice. The Committee also approved the Multiyear Programme of Work (MYPow) 2012–2015.

GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Committee:

- i) **Stressed** the need to continue to improve the management of fisheries and encouraged FAO to take leadership in these issues, including formulating global guidelines for sustainability, as well as assisting coastal developing States in strengthening management capacity (para. 19).
- ii) **Encouraged** FAO to continue its excellent cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (para. 24).
- iii) **Requested** the FAO Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to strengthen its consideration of technical issues related to fisheries management and international trade, consistent with the Panel's terms of reference, while underscoring the primary scientific role of the Panel (para. 34).
- iv) **Agreed** to continue FAO collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on issues related to trade in fish and fishery products and in particular the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the framework of the Doha Round, bearing in mind the rights and obligations of WTO Members (para. 35).
- v) **Supported** the establishment of an FAO Advisory Working Group on Genetic Resources and Technologies, that would advise FAO on matters concerning aquatic genetic resources and technologies, to enhance international cooperation on aquatic genetic resource management (para. 39j).
- vi) **Urged** FAO to reinforce, in a food security and improved nutrition context, including in the work of the Committee on World Food Security, its emphasis on fish as food and ensure that these aspects were not lost in the development and improvement of the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management, including by enhancing coordination and integration (para. 45).
- vii) **Urged** FAO to assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance discussions, debates, policy-setting frameworks and fora (para. 46).
- viii) **Requested** FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess the possible threats to fisheries and food security arising from the development of such deposits (para. 50).
- ix) **Agreed** on the need to develop implementation strategies for the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) at various levels including related policy reforms (para. 52h).
- x) **Agreed** that, despite some progress, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem which has a significant adverse impact on achieving sustainable fisheries and food security (para. 53).
- xi) **Agreed** that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners, including better coordination with other intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations System (para. 63).

PROGRAMME AND BUDGETARY MATTERS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

The Committee:

- i) **Recommended** that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control (para. 14).
- ii) **Encouraged** further studies of the impact of industrial fishing activities on species corresponding to low trophic levels (para. 20).
- iii) **Underlined** the importance of FAO's work on deep sea fisheries (para. 21).
- iv) **Asked** FAO to provide technical support, including for the development of sustainable management aquaculture plans (para. 22).
- v) **Agreed** that the Secretariat should investigate options for clearly indexing and streamlining the Code and its related instruments (para. 26b).
- vi) **Called for** further analysis on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks) (para. 26g).
- vii) **Stressed** that attention was required to ensure that bycatch and discards were addressed comprehensively in conservation and management assessments, within an ecosystem approach (para. 26m).
- viii) **Underlined** the importance of FAO's capacity-building activities on market access and value-addition, in particular for small-scale producers and processors in developing countries (para. 28).
- ix) **Agreed** with the terms of reference developed by the Sub-Committee for future work to be carried out in relation to the development of best practice guidelines for traceability (para. 30).
- x) **Agreed** that it would be useful to assess the effect of the ecolabelling schemes on fisheries management and economic returns (para. 33).
- xi) **Reiterated its support for** the work FAO has undertaken with regard to commercially exploited aquatic species of interest to CITES and **stressed** that such work should be funded by the FAO Regular Programme (para. 34).
- xii) **Reiterated** the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (para. 39b).
- xiii) **Reiterated** that allocation of financial resources for aquaculture activities of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department be increased (para. 39c).
- xiv) **Encouraged** the Secretariat to attend meetings of other international organizations with related mandates to raise the visibility of fishery (para. 49).
- xv) **Requested** FAO to continue its technical support to regional and national fisheries institutions, in particular regarding small-scale fisheries (para. 50).
- xvi) **Suggested** that FAO examine the impacts of ocean acidification and climate change, cooperate with other organizations on ocean pollution (para. 50).

- xvii) With regard to the development of SSF Guidelines, **expressed support for** the conduct of further national and regional consultations and the convening of an intergovernmental technical consultation in May 2013. It also noted the need for adequate funding to allow for balanced regional participation by governments and wide-ranging participation by civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders (para. 52b).
- xviii) **Requested** the Secretariat to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation to make efforts to reach consensus on the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance as soon as possible (para. 55).
- xix) **Reiterated its support** for the Global Record's continued development by FAO, using a phased approach keeping it cost-effective in coordination with other existing initiatives. (para. 56a).
- xx) **Urged** FAO, Members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors to provide financial and technical support to developing States to strengthen all aspects of their capacity to combat IUU fishing (para. 57).
- xxi) **Urged** the Secretariat to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives (para. 65).

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OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its thirtieth session in Rome from 9 to 13 July 2012. The session was attended by 120 Members of the Committee and one Associate Member, by observers from two other FAO Member Nations, the Holy See, by representatives from six specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN) and by observers from 64 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations. A list of delegates and observers is attached as Appendix B.
2. Mr Mohammed Pourkazemi, Chairperson, twenty-ninth session of COFI, opened the session welcoming the participants.
3. Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, inaugurated the meeting and delivered a statement noting that all five FAO Regional Conferences requested that emphasis be given to fisheries and aquaculture, and three Regional Conferences, Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, identified aquaculture as a priority. The text of his statement is attached as Appendix D.
4. The Committee noted the Declaration of Competence and Voting Rights presented by the European Union.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

5. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable for the session. The Agenda is attached as Appendix A to this Report. The list of documents which were placed before the Committee is shown in Appendix C.
6. The Committee agreed that, as a transitional measure, the Chairperson (Islamic Republic of Iran), First Vice-Chairperson (Norway), and Vice-Chairpersons (Canada, Chile, India, Spain, Zimbabwe) of the twenty-ninth session of COFI will continue serving during the thirtieth session of COFI until the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the thirty-first session of COFI under agenda item 13.
7. The Committee agreed to consider piracy as a concern for fishing vessels under agenda item 14 "Any Other Matters".

DESIGNATION OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

8. The following Members were elected to the Drafting Committee: Argentina, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Cyprus, Japan, Kenya, Nauru, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Spain, Sri Lanka and the United States of America. The United States of America chaired the Drafting Committee.

ADOPTION OF THE REVISED RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE AND RELATED CHANGES IN PRACTICE

9. The Committee reviewed and approved the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee set out in the Appendix to Document COFI/2012/9 including a subsequent further amendment to Rule I paragraph 2 proposed by the COFI Bureau in consultation with Members.

10. The revised Rules of Procedure, as adopted by the Committee, are in Appendix E.
11. The Committee endorsed the changes in current practice as proposed in COFI/2012/9.
12. The Committee agreed that the COFI Bureau of the thirty-first session of COFI would examine the proposal made by Thailand, on behalf of some Members of the Asia Regional Group, for the potential endorsement by the thirty-first session of COFI. The proposal was to change current practice of granting the first Vice-Chairperson the right of claiming the office of Chairperson in the succeeding session. The proposal also involved inserting an additional sentence at the end of the Rule I.1 of the revised Rules of Procedure to read as follows:

The Chairperson, the first Vice-Chairperson and five other Vice-Chairpersons should be elected from the following regions: one representative from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America and Southwest Pacific.

WORLD FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE: STATUS, ISSUES AND NEEDS (INCLUDING PRESENTATION OF THE STATE OF WORLD FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE [SOFIA] 2012)

13. The Committee strongly supported the initiative to include SOFIA as a specific agenda item, and suggested that this be continued in future COFI sessions. For future meetings, it requested releasing the SOFIA publication sufficiently in advance of COFI meetings to allow adequate time for review.
14. The Committee stressed the high value of SOFIA as a flagship publication which provides a clear understanding of global status and trends, reference points and setting directions for the future. The accuracy of data and statistics underlay the SOFIA conclusions, therefore the Committee recommended that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control. The quality of SOFIA could also be improved by collaborating with regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) to gather more information, and by including more references to explicit information sources.
15. For future editions of SOFIA, the Committee suggested placing emphasis on a number of topics, including monitoring of the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code), impacts of climate change, ocean acidification and pollution, working conditions for fishing crew members, success stories, for example, international plan of action (IPOA) issues, and positive developments, outcomes of research and development, transshipment of catches, mainstreaming gender aspects, impacts of the evolution of fish trade in the developing world, and insights of bycatch and biodiversity aspects.
16. The Committee stressed the need to ensure that key messages in SOFIA reach policy makers at all levels and the wider public audience. It was suggested that more use be made of SOFIA flyers which could support policy briefs. These could be translated locally into national languages, as needed, for wider distribution, particularly given the limitation on the numbers of printed copies of SOFIA made available to countries.
17. The Committee expressed concern regarding the way in which fish stock status was often reported particularly the negative notion given by reporting of a high percentage of

stocks being fully- or overexploited. In order to ensure accurate interpretation by the general public and avoid the risk of overemphasizing a negative perspective, the Committee recommended the FAO Secretariat consider a simpler classification of stock status, based on sustainability of their exploitation. It was suggested to establish two main categories containing all of the familiar stock status categories, one indicating a biologically-sustainable level of harvesting and another indicating a biologically-unsustainable level of harvesting. The sub-category fully-exploited stocks would then be grouped in the main category of biologically-sustainable level of harvesting. The Committee called on the FAO Secretariat to reference all information sources fully.

18. The Committee expressed concern that where there was some shifting of fishing capacity from areas where there was effective management to areas with less effective management, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing was prone to occur. The Committee noted the need to curtail shifting of fishing capacity that could contribute to IUU fishing.

19. The Committee stressed the need to continue to improve the management of fisheries. This should be achieved through enhancing international, regional and subregional collaboration, in particular between coastal and flag States, aiming at policy coherence, evaluating RFMOs performance and reforming them, as appropriate, while duly examining their complementarities, strengthening policy and legal frameworks in relation to IUU fishing, calling upon Members to consider acceptance of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (the 2009 Agreement), instituting schemes for reduction of overcapacity, and strengthening data collection, in particular for small-scale operations. Also management authorities needed to focus on conservation and management measures on stocks at risk. The Committee encouraged FAO to take leadership in these issues, including formulating global guidelines for sustainability, as well as assisting coastal developing States in strengthening management capacity.

20. The Committee encouraged further studies of the impact of industrial fishing activities on species corresponding to low trophic levels, in order to support the establishment of appropriate levels of catch and effort to mitigate their impact on the ecosystem.

21. The Committee underlined the importance of FAO's work on deep sea fisheries.

22. The Committee emphasized the potential of aquaculture to respond to the growing demand for food fish and to deliver social and economic benefits, while alleviating pressure on wild fish stocks. It stressed that such growth must be done in a sustainable manner and asked FAO to provide technical support, including for the development of sustainable management aquaculture plans. Issues under consideration included sustainably-managing wild fish stocks utilized for fish feed and increasing alternatively the utilization of fish waste, certification of high quality seeds and controlling environmental impacts.

23. The Committee highlighted the positive attributes of fish products as food and a healthy source of proteins and other nutrients. Members emphasized the role of fish in food security and how essential the fisheries and aquaculture sector was in providing food and income to developing countries and combating malnutrition. Concerns were expressed about lower rate of growth in fish consumption in Africa compared to the global trend.

24. FAO was encouraged to continue its excellent cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES AND RELATED INSTRUMENTS, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION AND STRATEGIES, AND OTHER MATTERS

25. The Committee expressed strong support for the standards and norms of the Code and its related instruments, to promote sustainable conservation and management, development and use of fish and fisheries products.

26. The Committee:

- (a) was concerned about the low response rate to the questionnaire and encouraged Members to respond to it, alerting the Secretariat if they encountered difficulties;
- (b) agreed that the Secretariat should investigate options for clearly indexing and streamlining the Code and its related instruments with a view to facilitate their accessibility and enable more effective implementation and should report back to the thirty-first session of COFI. This process should not involve a renegotiation of the instruments;
- (c) supported web-based reporting for the questionnaire taking into account bandwidth limitations in some developing countries;
- (d) agreed that there would be merit in undertaking a content review of the questionnaire in order to allow for assessment on the degree of progress for each topic;
- (e) supported gathering more information on regional efforts to implement the Code facilitated by a content review of the questionnaires for regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the introduction of web-based reporting for those entities;
- (f) recognized the need for ongoing assistance from FAO to enable developing countries to implement the Code more effectively including, as requested, the compilation of the questionnaire;
- (g) appreciated the review on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks) and called for further analysis and for including market States, and an improved record of data collection;
- (h) recognized that further actions by States and RFMOs needed to be taken for shark conservation and management;
- (i) recognized the global increase in aquaculture production and noted, *inter alia*, that the Code provided a framework for aquaculture development and that it was being used for that purpose;
- (j) welcomed the FAO/International Labour Organization (ILO)/IMO collaboration relating to safety-at-sea in the fisheries sector, noting that it should be continued;
- (k) expressed satisfaction that a new safety standard for small fishing vessels had been completed and was being published and that new FAO/ILO/IMO guidelines to assist competent authorities in the implementation of voluntary instruments on the design, construction and equipment of all fishing vessels of all types and sizes had been completed;

- (l) recognized that there was an ongoing need to support the implementation of the Code in relation to small-scale fisheries, acknowledging the importance of these fisheries for food and livelihood security in many countries;
- (m) noted information provided by Members concerning bycatch and discards. The Committee stressed that attention was required to ensure that bycatch and discards were addressed comprehensively in conservation and management assessments, within an ecosystem approach. The connection between bycatch and discards and the impact of fish aggregation devices and food security was underscored; and
- (n) noted ongoing external processes of assembling information on the mitigation of marine mammal bycatch in commercial marine fisheries as well as the need to undertake mitigation measures in all seas.

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE, HYDERABAD, INDIA, 20–24 FEBRUARY 2012

27. The Committee endorsed the report of the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Hyderabad, India, 20–24 February 2012, and thanked the Government of India for hosting the session.

28. The Committee underlined the importance of FAO's capacity-building activities on market access and value-addition, in particular for small-scale producers and processors in developing countries.

29. The Committee welcomed FAO's ongoing work on value-chains and encouraged FAO to expand this work to include new countries and species.

30. The Committee agreed with the terms of reference developed by the Sub-Committee for future work to be carried out in relation to the development of best practice guidelines for traceability, while some Members noted that they would be an important tool to combat IUU fishing. The Committee emphasized that this work should include the compilation and analysis of best practices and existing standards for different purposes of traceability, including a thorough analysis. The Committee emphasized that this work should include a gap analysis and stressed that the following principles should provide the framework for the analysis:

- (a) not create unnecessary barriers to trade;
- (b) equivalence;
- (c) risk based; and
- (d) reliable, simple, clear and transparent.

31. The Committee expressed its concern at the proliferation of private standards and ecolabelling schemes potentially leading to the creation of trade barriers and restrictions. Some Members supported the adoption of the evaluation framework to assess the conformity of public and private ecolabelling schemes with the FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries (the evaluation framework). Some Members did not support the adoption of the evaluation framework. It was noted that the evaluation framework was publicly available. Some Members called for swift progress towards the evaluation of ecolabelling and certification in the light of the FAO Guidelines.

32. Concern was expressed that some ecolabelling programmes used the FAO logo and this could mislead consumers.
33. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to assess the effect of the ecolabelling schemes on fisheries management and economic returns.
34. The Committee reiterated its support for the work FAO has undertaken with regard to commercially exploited aquatic species of interest to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Committee requested the FAO Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of CITES to strengthen its consideration of technical issues related to fisheries management and international trade, consistent with the Panel's terms of reference, while underscoring the primary scientific role of the Panel. Members stressed that such work should be funded by the FAO Regular Programme.
35. The Committee agreed to continue FAO collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on issues related to trade in fish and fishery products and in particular the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the framework of the Doha Round, bearing in mind the rights and obligations of WTO Members.
36. The Committee agreed to include an agenda item dedicated to small-scale fisheries at the next session of the Sub-Committee.
37. The Committee accepted the offer by Norway to host the fourteenth session of the Sub-Committee.

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, 26–30 MARCH 2012

38. The Committee endorsed the report of the sixth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Cape Town, South Africa, 26–30 March 2012, and thanked the Government of South Africa for hosting the session.
39. The Committee:
- (a) emphasized the importance of sustainable development of aquaculture as a sector contributing to global food and nutrition security, employment and income generation, while reiterating the need to empower small-scale aquaculture farmers and protect them from the increasing challenges they face;
 - (b) reiterated the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
 - (c) reiterated that allocation of financial resources for aquaculture activities of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department be increased;
 - (d) requested FAO to develop a conformity assessment framework for aquaculture certification guidelines and noted that such activities and resulting tools should not create any technical barriers to trade. Some Members expressed concern and reservation to this request;
 - (e) recalled that the implementation of the guidelines on aquaculture certification should be gradual and that it would be necessary to develop, at multilateral level and in coordination with the relevant IGOs, appropriate standards in order to

ensure that the certification system did not become unnecessary barriers to trade and remained consistent with the referenced international standards;

- (f) requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft strategy paper, including a long-term strategic plan for the Sub-Committee, and circulate it among the Members for comments well in advance of the next session;
- (g) emphasized the need for further work to:
 - improve quality and availability of feeds and alternative sources of feed;
 - improve the collection of data and their use in policy development;
 - enhance regional and interregional networking on aquaculture;
 - assist southern African countries contain the spread of epizootic ulcerative syndrome (EUS);
 - assist Asian countries contain the spread of early mortality syndrome (EMS);
 - assist Members improve biosecurity governance, develop capacity in risk analysis, and create networks of aquatic animal health experts;
 - enhance collaboration between FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and FAO and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);
 - produce better quality seed;
 - enhance aquaculture governance;
 - improve capacity development in aquaculture technologies through South-South Cooperation;
 - better understand the interaction between wild capture fisheries and aquaculture;
 - promote public private partnerships in aquaculture;
 - understand the ecological and social impacts on aquaculture from ocean acidification and climate change; and
 - develop cold water aquaculture and culture fisheries in reservoirs.
- (h) recognized the need to implement the recommendations of the Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on Aquaculture for Food Security, Nutrition and Economic Development held in Sri Lanka in July 2011, including the establishment of a global aquaculture fund;
- (i) emphasized the need for revitalizing the Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA); and
- (j) supported the establishment of an FAO Advisory Working Group on Genetic Resources and Technologies, that would advise FAO on matters concerning aquatic genetic resources and technologies, to enhance international cooperation on aquatic genetic resource management. The need to better differentiate between genetic improvement in the sense of selective breeding and the development of genetically-modified organisms was noted. Some Members considered that these organisms were covered by the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at the international level.

40. Argentina reiterated a reservation in writing regarding paragraph 14 of the report of the Sub-Committee in relation to the possibility that FAO might prepare a framework for the assessment of the conformity of aquaculture certification plans with the FAO Guidelines.

41. The Committee accepted the offer of the Russian Federation to host the seventh session of the Sub-Committee in St. Petersburg.