

# Latest developments in the establishment of a regional fisheries and aquaculture arrangement for Central Asia and the Caucasus

In FAN 41, the first steps in the process of establishing a regional inter-governmental collaboration arrangement in capture fisheries and aquaculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus were described. Since then, a Steering Committee was established, consisting of focal points from each of the countries in the region and the FAO Secretariat to the Steering Committee. This Steering Committee met for the first time in Ankara, Turkey on 24-26 March 2009 at the FAO Subregional Office for Central Asia. Its role was to prepare for the second regional inter-governmental meeting on the establishment of a Central Asian and Caucasus regional fisheries and aquaculture arrangement.

The Steering Committee meeting was funded under the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme through TCP/RER/3203 Component 2 “Support to the establishment of a regional fisheries and aquaculture organization for Central Asia and the Caucasus”. It was attended by officially appointed focal points of nine countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, People’s Republic of China, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan), as well as observers from the Interstate Coordination Water Commission (ICWC) based in Uzbekistan, the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TICA) and the World Bank.

The meeting discussed the pros and cons of the remaining options for the establishment of a regional inter-governmental arrangement in fisheries and aquaculture in order to decide on the most suitable option in terms of a cooperative framework for fisheries and aquaculture in the region. The options presented and discussed were:

- 1) an independent Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO) following the example of the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia and the Pacific (NACA), and
- 2) an Article XIV body under the FAO constitution.

Legal and policy assistance towards the development of the outline agreement of a regional inter-governmental arrangement for fisheries and aquaculture was provided by the FAO Secretariat.

The meeting initiated the drafting work on the substantive issues of the agreement that would establish the preferred type of arrangement and govern its operations and work. It also agreed on the next steps including a timeline to confirm the commitment to a cooperative arrangement and the choice on the option for the regional cooperative arrangement.

In accordance with the schedule agreed at the first Steering Committee meeting, seven countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan) have informed FAO

of their preference. These countries stated that they would prefer a body that is established under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution rather than an independent network type inter-governmental organization for fisheries and aquaculture.

Preparations are being made for a second regional inter-governmental meeting on the establishment of a Central Asian and Caucasus regional fisheries arrangement. This meeting will be hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of Turkey and is scheduled to take place in Trabzon, Turkey on 3-5 June 2009.

More information on the process for and matters relating to the establishment of the cooperative arrangement in fisheries and aquaculture for Central Asia and the Caucasus can be obtained from: Mr Raymon van Anrooy (FAOSEC) at [Raymon.vanAnrooy@fao.org](mailto:Raymon.vanAnrooy@fao.org); Mr Ndiaga Gueye (FIEL) at [Ndiaga.Gueye@fao.org](mailto:Ndiaga.Gueye@fao.org); Mr Blaise Kuemlangan (LEGN) at [Blaise.Kuemlangan@fao.org](mailto:Blaise.Kuemlangan@fao.org) or Mr Thomas.MothPoulsen (SEU) at [Thomas.Mothpoulsen@fao.org](mailto:Thomas.Mothpoulsen@fao.org).



*Participants of the First Steering Committee Meeting for the preparation of the Second Regional Inter-governmental Meeting*

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