



FAO/Regional Commission for Fisheries. Report of the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Aquaculture. Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 27–28 January 2009. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report. No. 895. Rome, FAO. 2009. 44p.

The fourth meeting of the Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA) of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) was held in Muscat, Oman, from 27 to 28 January 2009. The WGA reviewed the recommendations and decisions of the Commission made at its fourth session (Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 7–9 May 2007) and noted that all planned and endorsed WGA activities had been duly implemented. The meeting extensively discussed the final activities and inputs to the Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS) in view of its imminent and official launching in March 2009. The participants discussed and agreed on: i) the RAIS User Manual, ii) the promotional flyer, iii) the press release, and iv) the overall communication strategy to launch and to further strengthen the information system. The WGA noted with regret that the start of the “Aquaculture legal and policy framework project” during the intersessional period was not possible as the agreed financial input from all the contributing Commission members had not

been received. The WGA finalized its proposed programme of work for the new intersessional period based on the needs and recommendations resulting from the implementation of activities in the last biennium and emerging issues of importance for the region. The six main activities proposed in order of priority for the new work plan include: 1) application of risk analysis to aquaculture, 2) environmental monitoring in cage aquaculture, 3) impacts of red tides to aquaculture, 4) development of national strategies on aquatic animal health, 5) spatial tools and aquaculture zoning, and 6) aquaculture recirculation strategies. The WGA recommended that the Commission should also encourage and support more training and on-the-job cooperation in the field of aquaculture development among its members as well as in countries outside the region.

Further details can be obtained by writing to Mr Alessandro Lovatelli at FAO/HQ (E-mail: Alessandro.lovatelli@fao.org).



FAO/Regional Commission for Fisheries. Report of the Regional Technical Workshop on Sustainable Marine Cage Aquaculture Development. Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 25–26 January 2009. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report. No. 892. Rome, FAO. 2009. 135p.

The Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) Regional Technical Workshop on Sustainable Marine Cage Aquaculture Development was held from 25 to 26 January 2009 in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The workshop focus was on environmental impact assessment and monitoring, and aquaculture licensing for marine aquaculture cage systems. It also aimed at identifying constraints and shortcomings that needed to be dealt with to support the development of the cage industry. The document contains a set of suggestions and recommendations made by the experts with regard to technical and policy requirements needed to support the growth of the aquaculture sector as a whole and more specifically cage fish farming. The major constraints identified in the establishment of fish cages, particularly along the northwestern shores of the Gulf, have been the limited availability of suitable farming sites characterized by shallow waters,

highly fluctuating salinity and temperature levels and inadequate sea currents. Other limitations included price competition from wild-caught fish, inadequate farming technologies for the region and the limited availability of endemic candidate species of commercial importance suitable for cage aquaculture. The report also contains three review documents on marine cage aquaculture in the region, regulation of Norwegian net-cage fish farming, and a review on cage aquaculture licensing procedures prepared as background discussion papers for the workshop. With specific regard to environmental impact assessment (EIA) there is a need for the region and individual Commission members to develop an ad hoc EIA format based on the conditions of the local marine environment as this would determine the level of detail and elements needed to complete a meaningful and useful EIA study. The experts also agreed on the importance to establish regional Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for fish farm sites in order to set the limits for maximum permissible impact on the area exploited by the cage farming industry and assist in establishing monitoring programmes. With regard to cage aquaculture licensing, the experts acknowledged that a clear licence system is required for exercising legal and administrative control over aquaculture operations as it confers different rights and obligations, and allows public control with regard to environmental protection and the economic sustainability of the farming practices. Furthermore, it was noted that the legislation involved and process in aquaculture licensing should be transparent, readily available and include information on processing time, payable fees, etc. A proposed

cage aquaculture licence procedure was discussed and proposed at the workshop based on the format developed and adopted by the Sultanate of Oman. Other matters discussed at the workshop included the occurrence of hazardous algal blooms in the Gulf and its effects on fish farming and the possibility of establishing a regional fish cage farm for demonstration, research and training purposes.

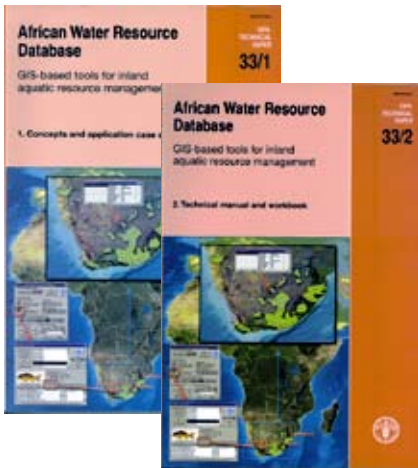
Further details can be obtained by writing to Mr Alessandro Lovatelli at FAO/HQ (E-mail: Alessandro.Lovatelli@fao.org).

Report of the Expert Consultation on Improving Planning and Policy Development in Aquaculture. Rome, 26–29 February 2008. FAO Fisheries Report. No. 858. Rome, FAO. 2008. 18p.

The Expert Consultation was convened by FAO in order to elaborate guidelines on how to improve the process of aquaculture policy formulation and policy implementation. The twenty-seventh session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), held in Rome, Italy, in March 2007 and the third session of the FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, held in New Delhi, India, in September 2006, had both indicated that guidance was required on planning and policy formulation and implementation monitoring in the aquaculture sector. The Expert Consultation had before it a comprehensive background document on the subject matter and recommended that two outputs be produced by FAO: (i) an FAO Fisheries Technical Paper on planning and policy formulation in aquaculture development that would include a full review of background information and the outcomes of the discussions held



by the Consultation; and (ii) an FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries booklet on planning and policy development in aquaculture that would be a more concise document highlighting steps towards good planning, policy formulation and implementation for the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector. The Consultation produced a detailed outline of the technical guidelines. It agreed on the definitions of policy, strategy and action plan and on the main phases of policy development processes. It highlighted the importance of considerations such as legitimacy, participation in such processes, but in specific circumstances, the inevitability of trade-offs and the possible resort to hard choices. In determining the link between policy formulation and policy implementation and the characteristics of strategies as a means for implementing policies, the Consultation emphasized that coordination was one of the most important component of the policy implementation discourse. The Consultation also made recommendations regarding future FAO work in supporting aquaculture policy development worldwide.



The African Water Resource Database (AWRD) -- a set of data and custom-designed tools, combined in a geographic information system (GIS) analytical framework aimed at facilitating responsible inland aquatic resource management with a specific focus on inland fisheries and aquaculture -- is now available on the internet at <http://www.fao.org/fishery/gisfish/id/2389> or upon request to FAO/FIMA in a set of two DVD's or ten CD-ROMs. Please consult the link below or contact us at FI-inquiries@fao.org for copies and further information. Related documents: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/gisfish/id/1038>



FAO. Report of the International Emergency Disease Investigation Task Force on a Serious Finfish Disease in Southern Africa, 18-26 May 2007. Rome, FAO. 2009. 70p.

This document is the final report of the work carried out by the International Emergency Disease Investigation Task Force on a Serious Finfish Disease in Southern Africa, a joint undertaking by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Botswana's Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and Department of Animal Health and Production (DAPH), the Aquatic Animal Health Research Institute (AAHRI) of Thailand's Department of Fisheries and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA), as a result of a technical mission to Botswana undertaken from 18 to 26 May 2007 and the subsequent outcomes of laboratory analysis of field samples conducted by AAHRI. This report provides comprehensive information on the outcomes of the 2007 Task Force investigation, building on earlier reports, and including further updates on epizootic ulcerative syndrome (EUS) occurrence in southern Africa based on an active surveillance programme that was implemented by FAO and partners in late 2007 until 2008. It also includes other ongoing activities and development aimed at further enhancing aquatic biosecurity in southern Africa.



RAIS – Regional Aquaculture Information System user manual (version 1.0) prepared by Valerio Crespi and Alessandro Lovatelli. 52 p. Rome, FAO. 2009.

The Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS) user manual has been just published by the Aquaculture Management and Conservation Service of FAO.

This simple user manual produced both in English and Arabic is addressed to all RAIS authorized users who wish to gain a better understanding on how the new established information system works and to exploit all its functionalities.

The new Web site has been developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) under the aegis of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) to facilitate the exchange of aquaculture information in the Gulf area among regional experts and stakeholders, and to promote and develop a sustainable aquaculture industry.

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