



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

### Twenty-first Session

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### REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CWP-20

Author: Secretariat

Items in the CWP-20 Report requiring action are reproduced here in bold and paragraph numbers refer to that report. A description of follow-up action is given for each in italics.

**Para. 30.** CWP welcomed the preparation of more field guides for the identification of elasmobranchs and agreed that further practical field guides were required to allow the at-sea identification of sharks based on fins and other body parts, which are often the only parts landed.

*In 2004 the FAO Species Identification and Data Programme (SIDP) released the "Field Identification Guide to the Sharks and Rays of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden", and the "Field Guide of Elasmobranchs of the Mediterranean and Black Sea" will be distributed during 2005. At its web site (<http://www.fao.org/fi/SIDP>), the SIDP in collaboration with FIGIS has so far provided 111 fact sheets of Elasmobranch species.*

**Para. 35.** CWP recognized that methodological descriptions of national fishery statistics programmes provide very useful indications of statistical quality and recommended that such descriptions be collated and made available by CWP agencies as far as possible.

*The FAO FishCode-STF project, which was launched in November 2004, will put a lot of emphasis on national methodological system descriptions for developing countries and reviews of their strengths and weaknesses. This will be implemented through a series of regional workshops conducted, where possible, in collaboration with regional fishery bodies. The first such workshop was held for Southeast Asia and was organized by FAO and SEAFDEC and hosted by*

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*the Government of Indonesia in Bali during 15-18 February 2005. Methodological descriptions were obtained from responses to questionnaires which were then refined through interviews with national officers. It is intended to publish the national descriptions and a regional synthesis.*

**Para. 36. A beta version of the developing new FISHSTAT Plus (version 3.0) was presented by FAO. In this new version, data are imported from a XML format that allows compatibility and easier data exchange with other platform like FIGIS and with common formats such as Excel or CSV text files. The version presented still misses some of the functionalities included in the previous version. CWP recommended that once a more stable version is completed, it will be sent to those CWP members which are presently using FISHSTAT Plus as a medium to disseminate their statistics (i.e. ICCAT, ICES, IOTC, NAFO) to allow them to comment before the final version is released. It was further recommended that following the release of the new version, it be possible for a certain period to continue to support the data format used in the previous version, preferably through a conversion facility or at least retention of the old version of the software, in order to allow a smooth transition between the two versions.**

*A project is underway to develop a new version of the FISHSTAT software. This project acknowledges that most CWP agencies stated their satisfaction with FishStat version 2.3, except for certain problems of stability noticed on new Windows platforms (XP, 2000) and related installation guidelines. A set of additional improvements was identified in close collaboration with EUROSTAT (coordinating the yearly updates in FishStat of Eurostat, ICES, NAFO, ICCAT) and terms of references were elaborated accordingly. Discussions were then held with software developers in order to identify the best approach for implementation of the requirements. The most rational proposal for the short term to ensure maintenance of FishStat 2.3 resolving its stability problems, and implement minimal improvements such as user documentation or few bug fixes, whereas the medium term would see development of a new version of FishStat facilitating updates of existing data sets and creation of new data sets based on partial reuse of FIGIS developed technologies. In that regard, an end user survey would be conducted in order to distinguish the essential features of FishStat that need to be maintained from others less important.*

**Para. 37. CWP recommended that FAO should continue to support and maintain the development of FISHSTAT Plus and provide assistance, including the provision of simple data import procedures which can be used by CWP agencies to implement data updates or revisions.**

*Considering the strategic choices stated under Para. 36 above, FAO will continue to provide advice and support to implement data updates or revisions.*

**Para. 38. For the collection and compilation of fisheries statistics in the South East Asia region, CWP recommended that FAO and SEAFDEC investigate the feasibility of harmonising their data collection inquiries in order to reduce the burden on countries submitting statistics to both organizations, taking note of the particular requirements of the SEAFDEC region concerning small scale fisheries.**

*The FAO and SEAFDEC Secretariats jointly developed a proposal to harmonize their statistical inquiries and this proposal was considered by the FAO-SEAFDEC regional workshop (Bali, 15-18 February 2005). The proposal was adopted almost in its entirety and welcomed by ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries as a way to reduce the burden of reporting. The aim will be to introduce the harmonized reporting system with effect from 2006.*

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**Para. 42.** CWP noted that several general purpose fishery data systems are used or under development by different RFBs or individual countries. The CWP recommended that characteristics of such information systems should be compared and evaluated in a workshop organized by FAO that should be convened before CWP-21 which could consider the outcome.

*This activity was not undertaken during the current biennium due to shortage of funds. However, there is a possibility of holding such a workshop under the FishCode—STF project as part of the methodological component in Phase 1.*

**Para. 44.** There was considerable discussion concerning to what extent CWP should involve itself in advocacy for improved statistics and in support of statistical development. While all participants agreed that CWP should play a more active role in drawing attention to shortcomings in current fishery statistics and the need for improvements, opinions varied as to how far this should be taken. It was finally agreed that the first option presented in the Review paper, which involves taking advantage of opportunities as they arise to draw attention to shortcomings and the need for improvement, should be pursued for the foreseeable future. The second option, which would be much more pro-active, would probably require a change to the CWP Statutes and additional funds for a work programme. Although many CWP agencies have a mandate to pursue such initiatives, it is doubtful that CWP has under its current Statutes.

*No major advocacy activities were undertaken during the inter-sessional period. One CWP output which has commanded considerable attention, however, is the CWP Handbook on Fishery Statistical Standards published on the web. This sort of technical advocacy is central to the mandate of CWP.*

**Para. 45.** There was also considerable discussion concerning the lack of recognition by many governments of the need for reliable statistics as a basis for fisheries policy making and management. It was agreed that a 1–2 day workshop on this topic should be held prior to CWP-21. If the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries is adopted, the workshop could focus on implementation of the Strategy with a focus on the national level, and on the needs of developing countries in particular.

*Such a workshop will take place prior to CWP-21.*

**Para. 46.** It was agreed that in future CWP should aim to promote its work for the improvement of fishery statistics more widely, as at the national level it was little known. In pursuing such wider recognition in future, it is better to avoid the term “advocacy” when considering CWP’s role, but rather to use alternative terms such as “advisory”.

*See follow-up to recommendation in para. 44 above.*

**Para. 57.** CWP recommended that importing and exporting countries should transmit full trade document information to the RFBs and requested FAO to send the draft forms of the standard documents which FAO is designing to the RFBs concerned, prior to the next meeting of RFBs in March 2003. CWP recommended that the Agencies concerned should liaise on the aspects related to the conversion factors, and the exchange of catch certification and trade documentation information.

*No RFBs reported receiving trade document information from importing and exporting countries. FAO sent draft forms to the RFBs prior to the RFB meeting in 2003.*

**Para. 63.** CWP noted that, while the terms “nominal catch”, “landings” and “product weight” have been defined in various publications of CWP agencies (including the Handbook of Fishery Statistical Standards), some of them tended to be used rather loosely (for example “catch” being used when “nominal catch” was the more accurate term). Data collators were urged to avoid confusion for the data users by applying the terms in a more rigid manner. CWP recommended the use of the term “gross removals” to cover the nominal catch (the live weight equivalent of the landings) plus the quantities discarded (also expressed in live weight) and that this also be reflected in the text of the Handbook.

*The term “gross removals” is included in the Catch Concepts diagram in the Handbook and the term Gross Catch mentioned in the text in relation to Nominal Catch (see page 10 of the limited print edition of the Handbook).*

**Para. 69.** CWP recommended that a common format and similar graphic user interface for sharing and presenting vessel records be agreed and adopted. Such a goal could be achieved through setting up a common system to share, manage and present data. In that respect, CWP further recommended that the documents prepared by FAO be reviewed by interested parties, with feedback provided by May 2003, and that close collaboration between FAO and interested regional fishery bodies take place, regarding both system design and layout.

*A proposal for a common format and GUI for sharing and presenting vessel records was circulated to CWP agencies but no response was received. A reminder was sent but no responses were received. Such a format was originally intended to facilitate exchange of data on vessels authorized to fish (a so-called “white list”). However, it should be noted that the FAO Technical Consultation to Review Progress and Promote the Full Implementation of the IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing and the IPOA for the Management of Fishing Capacity (Rome, 24-29 June 2004) had recommended (Appendix E, para. 8) that “in recognition of the range of work being undertaken by various RFMOs on the IUU fishing and over-capacity issues, call on the FAO to promote coordination on such work, to establish a database of the available information including any available list of IUU vessels identified and publicized by RFMOs and to make information on IUU fishing available through the FAO Fisheries internet site”. This matter (establishing a so-called “black list”) will need to be discussed by CWP-21, possibly under Any other business (Agenda item 12).*

**Para. 72.** The meeting noted that the CWP has participated according to its mandate in the meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) and the above-mentioned technical consultation. The RFBs have also participated in the development of the proposed FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries. The meeting agreed that CWP would be prepared to facilitate implementation of the Strategy within areas of its mandate.

*The role of CWP in implementation of the Strategy–STF will be discussed at a dedicated workshop prior to the CWP-21 Session. As reported in the response to Para. 35 above, the first regional workshop held under the FAO FishCode–STF project was held jointly with SEAFDEC, a CWP member agency.*

**Para. 74.** Following considerable discussion on the position CWP could take in relation to the proposed Strategy at the forthcoming COFI meeting, it was agreed that the CWP position, which should be conveyed to COFI, is as follows:

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- Many elements of the proposed Strategy fall within the remit of the CWP and CWP is striving towards the same objective as that specified in paragraph 12 of the Strategy document, albeit in the narrower context of statistics;
  - In pursuit of its drive for improved fishery statistics at the national, regional and global levels, CWP supports the proposed Strategy as an overall framework within which its own aims clearly lie;

**CWP is prepared to actively facilitate implementation of the Strategy for those elements of the Strategy which fall under its mandate.**

*This statement was conveyed to the COFI Session in 2003 and COFI recognized the need for improved regional cooperation in improving data and information on status and trends of fisheries and the roles of regional fishery bodies and FAO as stated in the Strategy–STF (COFI report para. 64).*

**Para. 75. CWP noted with great interest the report of the Second FIGIS–CWP Meeting of 20 January 2003 and the draft Partnership Agreement which are presented in Appendix 7. CWP agreed with the distinction made between the roles of CWP and FIRMS Steering Committee (FSC) as stated in paragraph 38 of the report in Appendix 7.**

*The CWP and FSC Secretariates are trying ensure these distinct roles are maintained.*

**Para. 78. FAO informed that there had been consideration by the SEAFO process concerning the boundary line between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans as to whether 30°E or 20°E would be more practical as a boundary for its convention area (see CWP–17 report, paragraph 131). Similarly, there are boundary concerns regarding CECAF and SEAFO areas (in a small area of the northern boundary of area 47). CWP recommended that in general ad hoc adjustments to statistical boundaries should be discouraged and that any statistical boundary changes, which inevitably require changes to statistical data reporting questionnaires, should only be implemented if historical data can be adjusted to retain consistent time series (see CWP–17 report, paragraph 130). CWP further recommended that the Secretariat once again inquire of SEAFO as to its intentions concerning the boundary between areas 47 and 51 and, if the 30°E boundary is to be retained. The development of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) will also require similar considerations of its western boundary.**

*See doc. CWP-21/FAO under “Changes in fishing area boundaries”. Concerning other proposals for boundary changes, following discussions at the recent FAO-SEAFDEC regional workshop, changes to the boundaries between major fishing areas 61 and 71 (western end) and between 57 and 71 (Malacca Strait) are likely to be proposed by SEAFDEC to CWP-22.*

**Para. 81. CWP reviewed the proposed revision of the ISSCFV classification, noting that an earlier review was described in the report of CWP–19 (paragraphs 157–162). After extended discussions by CWP members, it was restated that the ISSCFV categories should be based on consideration of vessel structural characteristics, but agreed that some category terms should be revised to better reflect vessel types currently used in fisheries. Whilst FAO has had extensive consultations with fishery technologists, CWP recommended fisheries statisticians should also be consulted to develop suitable criteria and nomenclature. It was noted very few regional fishery bodies now use vessel types for statistical recording, and that most agencies now use gear types extensively, particularly in tuna fisheries. Thus, guidance was provided for improving the current proposal:**

- Purse seiners: the sub-categories American seiner and European seiner should be reworded to ‘Purse Seiner: American type’, and ‘Purse Seiner: European type’. The introduction of a ‘Purse Seiner: Chinese type’ category should be considered. To that effect SEAFDEC will liaise with FAO;
- Multipurpose vessels: ‘Polyvalent should be renamed ‘Multipurpose’; the multipurpose category should be reduced as much as possible, in order to avoid facilitating reporting against this opened category; the ‘Pelagic trawler – purse seiner’ would be an obvious category under multipurpose vessels;
- ‘Platform for aquaculture’ and ‘Fishing vessels using pumps for fishing’ should be deleted;
- ‘Local vessel types’ (e.g. ‘bottom otter trawler’) may be added as required at the third level as examples of vessel types under either first level or second level of standard categories.

**CWP recommended that after considering these inputs, the Secretariat revise the proposed revision and circulate it for comments.**

*See doc. CWP-21/FAO under “Proposed revision of the ISSCFV classification”.*

**Para. 87. The primary medium for dissemination of the new version of the Handbook is the Internet, although it was suggested that dissemination of the Handbook on a CD ROM would also be useful, and CWP recommended that FAO consider this. The content of the Handbook will be subject to ongoing revision and therefore CWP recommended that version control should be carefully maintained. It was also suggested that an appendix that lists the abbreviations of units of measurement would also be useful. The meeting congratulated FAO and Eurostat on their considerable efforts which have resulted in an extremely useful document.**

*Further revisions and refinement have been made to the Handbook since CWP-20 which is available on the web. It is now considered a final version which, nevertheless, will be subject to frequent updating, as necessary. A limited number of printed copies of the Handbook have been prepared for the CWP-21 Session.*