

EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rome, 18 – 20 May 2009

SUMMARY REPORT

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chairperson of EIFAC, Mr P. Hickley, opened the meeting of the Executive Committee of EIFAC on 18 May at 09:00 hours. Apologies were received from Mr K. Pinter, First Vice-Chair, and Mr. L. Váradi who were unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Hickley introduced Messrs. A. Jagsch, Second Vice-Chair, and I. Cowx, Chairperson Sub-Com IV, to Mr. N. Gueye, Chief International Institutions and Liaison Service (FIEL). The list of participants is given in Annex 1.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda was adopted without changes.

3. PLACE AND DATE OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

As already reconfirmed by the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development prior to the ExCom meeting, the Twenty-sixth Session of EIFAC will be held in Zagreb, Croatia, in May 2010. Mr. J. Suic, who was nominated by the Croatian Ministry as the official focal point for the general organization of the 26th Session of EIFAC, attended the ExCom meeting. Already prior to the arrival of Mr. Suic, the ExCom discussed the issue of a symposium in conjunction with the 26th Session as requested by the 25th Session with a strong view not to hold a symposium (see also point 5.2.6).

Mr. Hickley welcomed Mr. Suic who reported that the preparations for the 26th Session were well underway and that the meeting facilities in the “Hotel International” have been pre-booked for the period 18 – 26 May. The Chairperson then brought up the issue of the symposium and summarized the results of the previous discussions. Mr. Suic confirmed that Croatia was willing to host the Session even if no symposium will be held in connection with the Session. The ExCom then decided that there should not be any Symposium in connection with the 26th Session as this forthcoming Session was somewhat special as it will mainly deal with the strengthening and the future of EIFAC. Consequently, it was agreed that the Session should start on Monday 17 May in the afternoon with the Opening and a short session on the progress of the WPs. The Session will be adjourned for the whole of Tuesday 18 May for “formalized” informal talks with, and between, the delegations, after a specific introduction given for this part. It will be resumed on Wednesday 19 May in the morning for discussion and decisions on the future of EIFAC, and will close on Thursday 20 May late afternoon with the adoption of the report. The Session will be preceded by a one-day ExCom meeting on Sunday 16 May 2010.

A Letter of Agreement, including a Memorandum of responsibilities, between FAO and the Government of Croatia will be drafted and sent as soon as possible to Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development.

Action: G. Marmulla / R. Al Khafaji

4. SYMPOSIUM ON INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES OF INLAND COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

The Report of the Symposium on Interactions between Social, Economic and Ecological Objectives of Inland Commercial and Recreational Fisheries and Aquaculture, Antalya, Turkey, 21–24 May 2008, was published in the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report series as No 871, Suppl., in the 2nd semester of 2008. It was made available on the EIFAC website under the following link: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0358e/i0358e00.pdf>.

The publication and distribution of the symposium report was made possible by the FAO Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (SEC), which is based in Ankara, Turkey. Moreover, under a contract between SEC and the Hull International Fisheries Institute (HIFI), the papers presented at the symposium are being reviewed, selected and technically edited. It is foreseen that these papers will be published as Proceedings of the 2008 EIFAC Symposium in the EIFAC Occasional Paper series as No. 44 in late 2009.

Eleven papers, presented at the Symposium, will be published in an issue of Wiley's journal Fisheries Management and Ecology. Thirty papers will be published in the EIFAC Occasional Paper No. 44. All abstracts will also be included in the Occasional Paper. Both documents will include an obituary for the Chair of the 2008 EIFAC Symposium, Dr Ibrahim Okumus, who passed away in 2008.

Action: I. Cowx / R. van Anrooy / P. Hickley

Regarding the Antalya Symposium, the question arose whether the National Correspondents formally passed the recommendations on to their governments and whether the countries took note of these Symposium recommendations. It was noted that there is no monitoring of the implementation of the symposium recommendations in EIFAC.

Mr. Van Anrooy, Technical Secretary of the Symposium, was asked to draft a letter for the Chairperson to send to the EIFAC National Correspondents to draw their attention to the recommendations and to the need to follow up (including informing relevant players inside and outside the relevant Ministry).

Action: R. van Anrooy / P. Hickley

5. REPORTS OF THE SUB-COMMISSIONS

5.1 SUB-COMMISSION I – BIOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

Chairperson: T. Brenner (Germany)
Vice-Chairperson: J. Caffrey (Ireland)
Rapporteur: I. Navodaru (Romania)
Technical Secretary: G. Marmulla

Mr. Brenner presented the progress report on inter-sessional activities of this Sub-Commission which includes seven Working Parties. The ExCom reviewed and discussed the activities of this Sub-Commission carried out during the inter-sessional period as follows.

5.1.1 *Ad hoc* Working Party on Eels **Convener: R. Poole**

In 2008, the WP met in Leuven, Belgium, from 3 - 9 September. 41 experts from seventeen countries attended the meeting. As such, the 2008 Report does not present a comprehensive overview, but should be read in conjunction with previous reports of this WP. In addition to documenting the status of the stock and fisheries and compiling management advice, the WG also provided scientific advice in support of the EU recovery plan for the stock of European Eel and for setting up an international assessment of the eel stock. The following were the main recommendations:

- 1) Since recruitment remains at an all time low since records began, the stock continues to decline and stock recovery will be a long-term process for biological reasons, all exploitation and other negative anthropogenic factors impacting on the stock and affecting the production/escapement of silver eels should be reduced to as low as possible, until long-term stock recovery is achieved.
- 2) Assessment of the current and future status of the European spawning stock, in light of implementation of EMPs, including an assessment of the impact of anthropogenic mortalities and management actions, is urgently needed. This process should include:
 - 2.1) The aggregation of river basin specific data and assessments, into stock-wide assessments;
 - 2.2) The further development of models to assess compliance with the recovery target and evaluate management actions;
 - 2.3) The development of coherent local stock assessment procedures;
 - 2.4) The development of proxies for mortality rates;
 - 2.5) The international assessment of recruitment and stock trends to assess the response of the stock to management actions.
- 3) Eel Management Plans and their accompanying data should be made available to the joint EIFAC/ICES Working Group on Eel at the earliest opportunity to facilitate the assessments of the stock.

The joint EIFAC/ICES Working Group on Eel will meet in Gothenburg, Sweden, between the 7 - 12 September 2009 and the meeting will be hosted by the Swedish Board of Fisheries.

The ExCom meeting thanked the WP for being so active, and encouraged continuation.

Action: R. Poole / G. Marmulla

5.1.2 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Fish Monitoring in Fresh Waters **Convener: P. Hickley**

The Convener clarified that the two draft documents, i.e. Information Note on Electric Fishing Best Practice - <ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/DOCUMENT/eifac/wpfmfw/WPFMFwbestpracticeguidev2.pdf> and Manual on recommended sampling methods for the monitoring of fish populations in fresh waters -

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/DOCUMENT/eifac/wpfmfw/DraftGuidelinesMonitoringFishFreshwaters.pdf> , that are on the EIFAC website have not been modified for three years and still await further comment and input from members of the Working Party.

The Convenor continued to provide a regularly updated list of fisheries related conferences.

The revised draft standard “Water Quality - Guidance on the estimation of fish abundance with mobile hydroacoustic methods” was presented by Mr Hateley (UK) at the CEN TG4 Fish Task Group in Hof, Germany on 28 May 2008. This version has now been circulated to member states for the prEN vote and the outcome should coincide with the next CEN meeting in Lelystad, Holland, on 27 May 2009. EC Mandate M/424 “Mandate for standardisation addressed to CEN for the development or improvement of standards in support of the water framework directive” (WFD, 2000/60/EC) was also discussed at the Hof meeting. This requires all CEN methodological standards to be validated through inter-laboratory comparisons. The draft Hydroacoustics standard was one of eight work packages selected for validation and CEN advertised for tenders to co-ordinate the field trials. A joint contract has been awarded to the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and the Environment Agency (Project Coordinators – Ian Winfield and Jon Hateley) with work planned for the 2009 survey season.

The WP assisted the Biology Centre of Sciences of the Czech Republic to conduct the conference “Fish Stock Assessment Methods for Lakes and Reservoirs: Towards the True Picture of Fish Stock”, held in Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic, 11 - 15 September 2007. The Convenor assisted with the editing of selected papers for the proceedings. These have now been published as a special issue of Fisheries Research, Volume 96, February 2009. It is intended to provide similar support to the conference Fish Sampling with Active Methods, 8 – 11 September 2010 (www.fsam2010.wz.cz).

The ExCom meeting thanked the Convenor for his efforts and encouraged continuation.

Action: P. Hickley / G. Marmulla

5.1.3 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Introductions and Stocking

Convenor: I. Cowx

The Convenor of the WP provided expert advice to the EU on implementation of the Council Regulation 708/2007 on Use of alien and locally absent species in aquaculture. The EU FP6 funded project entitled “Impact of alien species in aquaculture (IMPASSE)” has been used as a vehicle for the WP.

The ExCom meeting thanked the Convenor for his efforts and encouraged continuation.

Action: C. Cowx / G. Marmulla

5.1.4 *Ad hoc* Working Party on Management of Sturgeon

Convenor: M. S. Chebanov

During the inter-sessional period links have been actively maintained with IUCN, World Sturgeon Conservation Society (WSCS) and other organizations involved in sturgeon related activity. Two long-term technical cooperation projects have received support from Turkish, Italian and Russian members of the WP, i.e. TCP/ INT/3101 “Capacity building for the

recovery and management of the sturgeon fisheries of the Caspian Sea” and TCP/TUR/3202 “Recovery of Sturgeon Population in Turkey: Habitat Assessment and Restocking”.

The key output of the first project is the preparation of the “Technical guidelines on sturgeon hatchery practices and hatchery management” (English and Russian version). The first draft has been completed by the WP Convener with assistance of sturgeon experts from World Bank and Iran (Dr. Pourkazemi) and was presented during the UNDP/FAO/World Bank, Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan organized “Regional training workshop on sturgeon hatchery practices and management”, held in Atyrau, Kazakhstan, in April 2009, with the participation of four of the five Caspian littoral states. The Secretary of EIFAC and the Technical Secretary of EIFAC Sub-Commission IV participated as resource persons in the workshop. The publication of the guidelines in the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper series is planned for 2010.

The longer-term objective of the second project is to contribute to the recovery process of the sturgeon populations in the Black Sea through restocking and other appropriate mechanisms. The project activities include the construction of a special sturgeon breeding facility and the creation of a Black Sea sturgeon broodstock in captivity. The convener and the WP members in collaboration with the Central Fisheries Research Institute and the University of Istanbul have elaborated the programme of genetic research of the Black Sea sturgeon population. The Danube Action Plan is currently being implemented with active participation of the WP experts from Rumania, Germany and Austria.

The Russian members of the WP took part in an international meeting in the frame of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) activity. This event was held in Krasnodar, Russia, in November 2008. The Convener gave a presentation on “Sustainable commercial sturgeon culture development in the BSEC member states”.

The members of the WP have been involved in the assessment of the status of different sturgeon species to update the IUCN Red List. During the inter-sessional period the WP has also been engaged in preparation activities of the 6th International Symposium on Sturgeon (www.iss6.org), which will take place in Wuhan, China, in October 2009.

The ExCom meeting thanked the WP for being so active, and encouraged continuation.

Action: M. Chebanov / G. Marmulla

5.1.5 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Fish Passage Best Practices

Convener: A. Zitek

The third meeting of the EIFAC Working Party on Fish Passage Best Practices was held in the Fishery Department of the Regional Water Management Board in Krakow, Poland, from 3-6 June 2008. This meeting constituted the main activity of the WP was 2008. Besides developing a definition for nature-like fish passes and a terminology for different types of fish passes, behavioural aspects of fish migration, mainly with regard to fish pass hydraulics, were the main issue. After some discussions on the use of swimming speeds of fish (maximum, burst, and sustained maximum swimming speed) for defining the hydraulic design of fish passage facilities, it was concluded that clarifications on the terminology and further discussions are needed. Furthermore, it was stated that the efficiency of fish passage facilities has to be assessed adequately; different methods for assessing their functionality were presented. With regard to downstream migration of fish the general conclusion was that there

is still a lack of information of successful downstream migration installations for various species and age classes, especially eel. Different methodologies to guide and influence fish during their downstream migration are available (physical, behavioural devices, management of power plants), but much more work to identify really effective systems is needed. As an important result of this session, a rough outline of “Best practice guidelines for safe passage of downstream migrating eels”, including a tentative time schedule and a list of volunteers, was developed. With regard to eel migration two issues were identified as being crucial:

- the assessment of the functioning of existing types of fish passes for eel, and
- the establishment of downstream migration structures for eel; compared to other species this seems to be more difficult for eel.

Generally, policy factors that are different in each EU member state, were identified to be crucial for any success with regard to conservation and rehabilitation of fish populations within the WFD implementation process. Especially the construction of new power plants in nature-like river sections throughout Europe encouraged by the EU policy for “green energy” and supported by EU funding was identified as a problematic, because contradictory, policy. Finally, it was concluded that EU policy issues with regard to connectivity better fit into the TORs of the newly created EIFAC WP on the implementation of the EU WFD. Therefore, a more intensive contact was established with this WP.

Summary - time frame and further activities of the WP

- Proposed date and location of next meeting: summer/autumn 2009 in Ireland, organized by Kieran McCarthy.
- The final draft of the guideline on natural fish pass design criteria should be presented at this meeting, although it was suggested that it would be better to finalize it earlier.
- A best practices guideline on monitoring methods will be developed by A. Zitek and O. Calles, which will be distributed to WP members for review and comments. A final draft will be presented at the Ireland meeting.
- A final draft of the “Best practice guidelines for safe passage of downstream migrating eels” will be presented at the Ireland meeting.

Upon request by the ExCom the link <http://www.linkedin.com> provided by WP member Mr. H. Wanningen herman@wanningenwaterconsult.nl is given here. Through this link a group of experts on the theme fish migration can be contacted. The ExCom meeting thanked the WP for being so active, and encouraged continuation.

Action: A. Zitek / G. Marmulla

5.1.6 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Mapping of Fish Distribution and Aquatic Habitat Quality

Convener: R. Fricke

The ExCom meeting noted with disappointment that no report from the Convener had been received for the inter-sessional period from May 2008 – April 2009. As this WP has now been inactive for a couple of years, it was decided that it will be recommended to the 26th Session to discontinue this WP in the absence of an active convener.

The Chair of Sub-Com I raised the issue of lack of correct nomenclature for European freshwater fish brought to his attention by the Swiss National Correspondent of EIFAC. After

an intensive discussion the ExCom decided not to get involved in certifying and recommending fish names. It was suggested that reference be made to Fishbase for the current valid name of a species (<http://www.fishbase.org>).

Action: R. Fricke / T. Brenner / G. Marmulla

5.1.7 Ad Hoc Working Party on Crayfish Convener: M. Pursiainen

The WP had planned to hold a meeting in connection with the IAA Symposium from 4-8 August 2008 in Kuopio, Finland. However, due to the very extensive conference programme, it was not possible to organize a meeting. The Symposium organizers and session chairperson allowed the Convener of the WP to inform the audience about the WP and its planned activities. A ten-minutes presentation about EIFAC and the WP on Crayfish was given to 120 international participants from all over the world. The future programme of the WP was generally welcomed by the congress participants. The Convener had the possibility to invite interested experts to join the WP which brought the number to 35 from most of the EIFAC member countries.

A Workshop on Regional European Crayfish, entitled “Future of Native Crayfish in Europe”, will be held from 7-10 September 2009 in Pisek, Czech Republic, in connection with a crayfish meeting in Vodnany, Czech Republic. The workshop will discuss a) the distribution and change of native and introduced crayfish species; and b) crayfish production in inland waters (catch and aquaculture production). The Convener had sent invitations inter alia to the Chair of Sub-Com I and the secretary of EIFAC.

Ms. Catherine Souty-Crosset has agreed to host a Workshop in Poitiers, France, in 2010. The meeting will deal with a) role of crayfish in ecosystems, and b) socio-economic matters. It is also planned to hold a Workshop in Finland in 2011 which will deal with responsible management, communication and diseases. Final decisions will be taken after the 26th Session of EIFAC.

The ExCom meeting thanked the WP for being so active, and encouraged continuation.

Action: M. Pursiainen / G. Marmulla

5.2 SUB-COMMISSION II – AQUACULTURE

Chairperson: L. Váradi (Hungary)
Vice-Chairperson: T. Hubenova (Bulgaria)
Rapporteur: O. Schlumberger (France)
Technical Secretary: U. Barg

In the absence of Mr. Váradi, Mr. Barg presented Mr. Váradi’s progress report on inter-sessional activities of this Sub-Commission (EIFAC/2009/4) which includes three Working Parties and an Eastern European Affairs initiative. The ExCom reviewed and discussed activities of this Sub-commission during the inter-sessional period as follows.

5.2.1 *Ad hoc* Working Party on the Relationship between Fish Transfer and Fish Health

Convener: E. Hudson

The ExCom meeting noted with disappointment that no report from the Convener had been received for the inter-sessional period from May 2008 – April 2009. The Convenor did not respond to any correspondence either from Mr Váradi nor from Mr Barg. There was an extensive discussion on the importance of this Working Party as well as on the lack of any WP outputs for many years, despite efforts by officers of this Sub-Commission, especially Mr Proteau, to re-vitalize this WP. The ExCom meeting decided that it will recommend the closure of this WP to the 2010 Session of EIFAC. It was agreed that Mr Hudson should be contacted again by Mr Váradi, Chair Sub-Commission II, to be informed about this decision.

Action: L. Váradi / U. Barg

5.2.2 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Aquatic Resources Management in Aquaculture

Convener: M. Verdegem

The ExCom meeting noted with disappointment that no report from the Convener had been received for the inter-sessional period from May 2008 – April 2009. The Convenor did not respond to any correspondence from Mr Váradi. However, in response to a recent inquiry by Mr Barg, he had confirmed continued interest in and efforts on this Working Party, and advised that he currently is gathering a new working group, in cooperation with the WorldFish Center. The ExCom wished to thank Mr Verdegem, and stressed that it would welcome regular information on progress made by this Working Party.

Action: M. Verdegem / U. Barg

5.2.3 *Ad Hoc* Working Party on Market Perspectives of European Freshwater Aquaculture

Convener: L. Váradi

Mr Váradi, Convenor of this Working Party, proposed the organisation in 2010 of a freshwater fish marketing workshop which could be a joint exercise between FAO, EIFAC, European Commission, NACEE and EUROFISH. He suggests that fish marketing remains a critical issue in the freshwater aquaculture sector throughout Europe, including the non-EU countries. According to the Convenor, there are numerous issues that should be important agenda points of a specific workshop on freshwater fish marketing such as: changing consumer's demand; competition with import products; certification and labeling; trade with non-EU Eastern European countries; role of producers associations; diversification of technologies, species and products; commodity versus niche market.

The Convener of the Working Party indicated that he is ready to coordinate the organizing work of the Workshop, however a timely decision is required. The possible support from donor organizations should be explored as soon as possible. The Meeting recognized that FAO/EIFAC/EC had jointly organized a similar workshop in 2001, and that the proposed themes might well be considered by an EIFAC workshop. Such a workshop could be organized in cooperation with interested partners, and importantly, also in close collaboration with experts active in EIFAC Sub-Commission IV. It was agreed that Mr Váradi be invited to prepare a draft prospectus to seek collaboration and technical inputs by Sub-Commission IV, with a view to confirm interest in such joint effort.

Action: L. Váradi / U. Barg

5.2.4 Eastern European Affairs: Network of Aquaculture Centers in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE) **Convener: L. Váradi**

The reporting on NACEE focused on three activities:

- NACEE's 5th Director's meeting in Lviv, Ukraine (October 2008), and the discussion on "Future evolution possibilities of NACEE". NACEE discussed whether or not to initiate steps of moving and transforming towards an intergovernmental network organization. The participants however decided to keep NACEE's NGO status, for the time being, while deferring the target of IGO transformation to the future.
- the FAO/NACEE Conference on Aquaculture of the Caucasus Countries in Yerevan, Armenia (April 2009). The meeting was supported by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (FAO-REU). Recognising the strong interest in the Caucasus region to collaborate with NACEE, the change of the statutes of NACEE will be proposed to the NACEE Directors in order to accept institutes and organisations from Caucasus countries as full members of NACEE.
- the First NACEE Conference of Young Researchers held on 28-29 April 2009 in Tyumen, Russia.
- the forthcoming 6th NACEE Directors Meeting to be held in Warsaw, Poland in September 2009 with the support of FAO-REU, with a special side event on the role of the industry in the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform (EATIP).

Action: L. Váradi / T. Moth-Poulsen / U. Barg

5.2.5 Structure and function of the Aquaculture Sub-Commission

The Chair of Sub-Commission II repeated his suggestion that the Aquaculture Sub-Commission could be abolished and the activities of its Working Parties be integrated into other Sub-Commissions. He again raised the question, what is the reason to maintain a separate Sub-Commission on aquaculture issues. He suggested that there is an increasing need for the collaboration on a complementary basis between various European aquaculture organizations with clear mandate, efficient working structures and appropriate resources. It is the view of the Chair that Sub-Commission II doesn't have these necessary attributes and their establishment seem to be also unlikely.

The ExCom recalled that the Antalya Session requested the name of EIFAC be changed to include aquaculture, i.e. European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC), confirming that the Commission does recognize the growing importance of aquaculture in Europe. The meeting further recognized that while there a number of societies, associations, and organizations dealing with aquaculture in Europe, there is no such organization which would provide an inter-governmental forum for discussion and consensus building on aquaculture, except for EIFAC. Recalling the discussions in Antalya, the meeting agreed that the restructuring of EIFAC's Sub-Commissions be dealt with in the context of the ongoing Review of EIFAC's Functioning. The ExCom noted with appreciation the views of Mr Váradi, but decided that Sub-Commission II should continue its business until the Review has been finalized.

5.2.6 Organisation of the EIFAC Symposium on Multi-functional Inland Aquaculture in Croatia in 2010

Mr Váradi, Chair of Sub-Commission II, had agreed to be the Convener of the Symposium and developed a symposium prospectus by the end of 2008. As reported, organizational efforts, however, stopped after receiving information from the Technical Secretary of Sub-Commission II that FAO will not be able to provide secretarial support and assistance in the preparation and publication of documents from this symposium. Given these circumstances, the Convener, after consulting with the Vice Chairperson and Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission and also with the representative of the host country, suggested not to hold the EIFAC Symposium as planned. Further, it seems unrealistic to organize a successful symposium during the short period available until the event, while lacking appropriate resources for doing all the preparatory work. Mr Váradi therefore proposed the organisation of a Workshop on Freshwater Fish Marketing in 2010 to be considered as an alternative to the symposium in question.

The ExCom intensively discussed various aspects associated with the matter. In responding to Mr Hickley's questions, Mr Barg confirmed that severe budgetary constraints and significant changes in priorities have led FAO to the decision of reducing its financial and staff resources in support of the symposium. The meeting considered various issues and options, including :

- the importance of the symposium attracting more numerous attendance at the session, and serving as entry point for newcomers to EIFAC;
- the holding of the proposed Workshop on Freshwater Fish Marketing in lieu of the symposium;
- the holding of a special workshop on the institutional review and reform of EIFAC in lieu of the symposium;
- the holding of the Session without a preceding technical meeting;
- the possibility of inviting funding support by EC for such an event;
- the urgent need of (i) identifying a new convener, as well as (ii) of circulating of the prospectus, in case that the symposium or the workshop should be held.
- the possibility of holding a special preparatory meeting of the EIFAC Executive Committee before the 26th Session.

After extensive discussions the meeting concluded that there is not sufficient time available for adequate preparation of the symposium, and decided to cancel the symposium. In view of the strategic importance of the 26th Session of EIFAC for the envisaged discussions on the ongoing review and institutional reform of EIFAC, the ExCom decided to hold a special meeting of the EIFAC Executive Committee on 16 May before the Session in 2010. The proposed Workshop on Freshwater Fish Marketing, if confirmed, could be held at any other dates, but preferably not in lieu of the cancelled symposium.

5.3 SUB-COMMISSION III – PROTECTION OF THE AQUATIC RESOURCE

Chairperson: G. Castelnaud (France)
Vice-Chairperson: E. Ciccotti (Italy)
Rapporteur: T. Vehanen (Finland)
Technical Secretary: U. Barg

Mr Castelnaud presented his progress report on inter-sessional activities of this Sub-Commission (EIFAC/2009/5) which includes three Working Parties. The ExCom reviewed and discussed activities of this Sub-commission during the inter-sessional period as follows.

5.3.1 *Ad hoc* Working Party on the Handling of Fishes in Fisheries and Aquaculture **Convener: R. Rösch**

Mr R Rösch, Convener of this WP, had reported that no effective progress has been made with the tasks of this WP since the last EIFAC Session. A new job, significant workload and other commitments have prevented so far the Convener from pursuing further activities of the Working Party, in particular the preparation of a draft position statement by EIFAC on animal welfare issues in inland fisheries and aquaculture.

The ExCom confirmed EIFAC's continued interest in the issues involved and reiterated the need for a related EIFAC Position Statement. The meeting therefore requests the Convener to prepare such a short position statement, in close cooperation with Working Party members, for presentation, discussion and possible adoption at the next Session of EIFAC. The ExCom underlined that the Convener is invited to confirm to the ExCom his availability to undertake the task of drafting such a EIFAC Position Statement, together with his Working Party members.

Action: R. Rösch / U. Barg

5.3.2 *Ad hoc* Working Party on Prevention and Control of Bird Predation **Convener: P. Heinimaa**

The work of the *ad hoc* Working Party after the 25th Session had concentrated on following and participating in the discussions and meetings carried out by the European Parliament and European Commission. Mr Kinderman, a member of the European Parliament, and the European Anglers Association (EAA) have been in 2008-2009 the active parties in raising the issues on cormorant-fisheries interactions in the European Parliament plenary and Fisheries Committee and in EAA leaflets and suggestions to the European Commission. The issues raised have been the same as recognized by the 25th Session and which are mentioned also in the *ad hoc* Working Party's new TOR, agreed in May 2008, as follows:

- Work towards the pan-European Cormorant Management Plan (ECMP).
- Collect information from different sources on the abundance and distribution of the cormorants in the member countries.
- Assess the interaction between cormorants and different stakeholders.
- Assess cormorant's influence on socio-economic conditions of fisheries and aquaculture.
- Gather information of the new developments and experiences in controlling the number of cormorants and their influence on fish stocks, fisheries and aquaculture.
- Identify possible knowledge deficits for different geographical regions.
- Disseminate information through National Correspondents, the Working Party Web site and publications.

As reported by Mr Heinimaa, the EU cormorant meeting in Brussels on 31 March 2009 organized by the European Commission DG Environment brought out the issues in which the European Commission is ready to go forward:

1. The European Commission recognizes the problems caused by the increasing amounts of cormorants.
2. More accurate and transparent information on cormorant amounts is needed and the European Commission will work towards this goal. Also fisheries organizations should

- be able to take part in helping to estimate the amounts of cormorants, their roosts and nests.
3. The European Commission is ready to update the guidelines for the derogations rules in the Bird Directive (Article 9).
 4. The European Commission is not willing to put up or support a European cormorant management plan and such plan is not needed to solve the problems.
 5. The European Commission will however support concerted actions between member countries (meaning larger and more active co-operation between different areas than nowadays). However, this activity is up to the member states. Legal framework in the EU-27 countries is the Bird Directive.

The ExCom recognized with disappointment that the European Commission does not consider a European cormorant management plan as a useful tool to manage the cormorant populations. Based on Mr Heinimaa's suggestions, the ExCom discussed the TORs of the Working Party, in particular the first TOR point. The meeting clearly recognized that a fishery advisory body, like EIFAC, cannot be expected to develop a cormorant management or action plan. Even if the development and implementation of such a plan is at present not being considered at the level of the European Commission, the meeting felt that the Working Party could in fact very usefully contribute to the improved management of cormorant/fisheries interactions.

In particular, the Working Party could, as recommended by the ExCom, focus its efforts on the assessment of effectiveness of critical mitigation measures, methods and areas, as well as on the compilation and dissemination of information of effective mitigation measures, supported by specific case studies conducted at country and regional levels. The ExCom therefore suggests to the Working Party Convenor to modify the current TORs of the Working Party, by replacing the first TOR point with a modified task which could, if agreeable, reflect the above suggestion. The Working Party would continue to coordinate the regional and country cooperation and activities of experts concerned with cormorant-fisheries interactions.

The ExCom noted with appreciation the Convenor's continuous efforts of information dissemination, in particular, the preparation of a newsletter-type information leaflet and Working Party web-pages, as well as contributions to closer co-operation between the countries around the Baltic Sea.

Action: P. Heinimaa / U. Barg

5.3.3 *Ad hoc* Working Party on EU Water Framework Directive (WFD)

Convener: C. Argillier

The Working Party developed a detailed work plan and recruited interested experts from 9 countries, being river and lake specialists. A first WP meeting was held in Paris from 8 to 9 December 2008. The WP is working on various aspects and issues associated with the WFD, including:

- understanding of relevance of fish indicators;
- consideration of fishery management measures when analyzing the ecological status of water bodies;
- end users of WP outputs, including scientists, WFD managers and stakeholders;
- WFD target areas including :
 - fishery and bird predation;
 - connectivity;

- habitat modification and river regulation;
- stocking and invasive species;
- factors influencing fish communities.

The ExCom congratulated Ms Argillier for her WP's good work and progress made so far. The meeting discussed the importance of focusing also on factors which do influence or affect both (i) the ecological assessment which is based on fish communities as well as (ii) the assessment of ecological status of fish communities.

Action: C. Argillier / U. Barg

5.4 SUB-COMMISSION IV – SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

Chairperson: I.G. Cowx (UK)
 Vice-Chairperson: M. Sipponen (Finland)
 Rapporteur: R. Arlinghaus (Germany)
 Technical Secretary: R. van Anrooy

Mr. Cowx presented the progress report on inter-sessional activities of this Sub-Commission which includes two Working Parties. The ExCom reviewed and discussed the activities of this Sub-Commission carried out during the inter-sessional period as follows.

5.4.1 Ad Hoc Working Party on Recreational Fisheries **Convener: R. Arlinghaus**

The Terms of Reference for the WP are:

- 1) Produce a European Code of Good Practice for Recreational Fishing by the end of 2007 in collaboration with various NGOs and key players.
- 2) Monitor key ongoing research world-wide related to social, economic and ecological aspects of relevance for recreational fisheries and its management.
- 3) Work closely with the WP on Socio-Economic Aspects of Inland Fisheries in producing methodological guidelines for the undertaking of social and economic surveys on recreational fisheries. Focus of this WP shall be on social-psychological approaches to measure basic concepts such as motivations, consumptive orientation, constraints experienced by recreational anglers etc.
- 4) Observe opportunities for funding a Pan-European study on the social and economic importance of recreational fisheries or similar endeavours on a European scale

In 2008, the EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries was published as EIFAC Occasional Paper No. 42 in English and French. It is available online <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0363e/i0363e00.pdf>. Hardcopies of the Code have been distributed at various conferences, including the Forth World Recreational Fishing Conference held in Florida, USA, November 2008. The convener of the WP and FAOSEC continue to receive requests for copies of the Code, which they try to accommodate as much as possible. The convener gave presentations on the Code of Practice at various occasions, including the above mentioned conference. The Code was well-received by the international community. Various translations in different countries are being prepared and a few have been submitted to the EIFAC secretariat. There has also been an initiative to develop a Charter on Recreational Angling by IUCN that will be based on the Code. In addition, the convener, the chairman of the Sub-Commission IV, Ian Cowx, and collaborators have produced scientific papers on the Code. One paper is published in a recent book edited by

O. Aas (2008) and titled “Global Challenges in Recreational Fisheries”. A second paper is in press in the Journal Fisheries Management and Ecology. A third paper is being drafted for the Journal of the American Fisheries Society. Further work is ongoing to produce easy-to-understand leaflets financed by the Dutch Angling Association.

Work in monitoring key research on recreational fisheries has continued. The convenor published a number of papers and book chapters on recreational fisheries. The topic of fish welfare was identified as a major area for the future. Work in this area has continued with various publications under review in international journals. The convenor presented a paper on this topic by invitation of the Fisheries Society of the British Isles at the 5th World Fisheries Congress held in Yokohama, Japan, in October 2008. The convenor is also serving as an Editor of the book proceedings that are to be developed in conjunction with the Florida world recreational fishing symposium. This book project will be with the American Fisheries Society.

The convenor, assisted by Oystein Aas, has produced a methodological contribution to the initiative by Matti Sipponen and colleagues on producing methodological guidelines for inland fisheries that is being prepared by the WP on Socio-Economic Aspects. The convenor actively participated in a workshop held in Helsinki in January 2009 together with a variety of international experts. Work has been distributed to finalize the methodological guidelines in 2009.

The EU calls for research have been monitored, but no appropriate call has been identified to present a proposal. The convenor was invited to chair a working group on methods of marine recreational fishing surveys in association by ICES. This invitation was declined. However, the initiative indicates that recreational fishing is becoming more prevalent at the European level. The convenor was also invited to contribute to a socio-economic study on inland fisheries led by Ernst & Young. However, due to various reasons, work in this area has been discontinued, partly because the European Commission decided to exclude recreational fishing from this study. The convenor will continue to monitor the EU calls for placement of a proposal at earliest convenience.

The ExCom thanked Mr Arlinghaus for the excellent work carried out by leading the preparation process of the EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries. The ExCom congratulated the WP for having received many expressions of interest in the Code and looked forward to receiving some copies of the easy-to-understand leaflet. The Technical Secretary of the Sub-Commission was requested to follow-up on the various translations of the Code and the EIFAC Secretary was asked to follow-up on whether the translated versions could be made available as such on the EIFAC website. Considering the Code has been completed and endorsed at the 25th Session of EIFAC in Antalya in 2008, it was suggested that the WP convenor revises the TORs of the WP before the 26th Session of EIFAC. It was suggested the new TORs for the WP include the issue of fish welfare in relation to recreational fisheries.

Action: R. Arlinghaus / I. Cowx / R. van Anrooy / G. Marmulla

5.4.2 Ad Hoc Working Party on Socio-Economic Aspects of Inland Fisheries **Convenor: M. Sipponen**

The WP Terms of Reference are as follows:

1. Produce methodological guidelines for the undertaking of social and economic surveys on recreational and commercial fisheries in collaboration with WP on Recreational Fisheries
2. Prepare a report of the significance of private property rights on the alternative traits to manage inland commercial fisheries.

Considerable progress has been made towards completion of task 1. A draft of the methodological guidelines has been prepared by the Convenor of the WP in collaboration with Ms K Parkkila, Mr J Vesterinen and Mr R Arlinghaus. This draft was the subject of a “Workshop on Guidelines for assessing socio-economic benefits of inland recreational and commercial fisheries” held in Helsinki, Finland 12-15th January 2009. The workshop was attended by 27 persons and the methodological guidelines for undertaking social and economic surveys on recreational fisheries were discussed in detail and refined. Comments from the workshop are being incorporated into the guidelines and a near-final draft will be circulated for a final round of comments to the WP members and the ExCom. It is aimed to seek endorsement of the Guidelines from the Commission at the 26th Session. A summary version will be published in the Journal Fisheries Management and Ecology.

The Convenor of the workshop is currently seeking additional information on property rights for inland commercial fisheries via a questionnaire sent to the National Correspondents in early 2009.

The ExCom thanked Mr Sipponen for increasing the efforts towards finalizing the guidelines. It was recognized that the WP made serious progress on this subject. The WP convener was requested to deliver the final draft for endorsement by the 26th session before the end of February 2010 to the EIFAC Secretariat.

Recognizing some overlap between the work of this WP and the WP working on the country reports in terms of data and information collection on commercial inland fisheries, it was argued that closer collaboration should take place between the two. The Chairman of EIFAC was requested to urge the WP conveners to work together.

Action: M. Sipponen/ I. Cowx / P. Hickley

5.5 WORKING PARTIES AND LIAISON GROUPS THAT ARE SO FAR UNDER NONE OF THE SUB-COMMISSIONS

5.5.1 *Ad hoc* Working Party on IUU Fishing and Poaching Convenor *ad interim*: P. Stachowiak

After some discussion, the ExCom decided that this WP should be placed under Sub-Com IV. Due to the fact that the Convenor took up a new job in Spain and was no longer available for EIFAC work, the WP remained largely inactive. It was agreed that a new Convenor will have to be found, possibly with the help of Mr. Stachowiak who has excellent contacts. The ExCom thanked Mr. Stachowiak for having acted as Convenor *ad interim*.

Action: R. van Anrooy / I. Cowx

5.5.2 *Ad hoc* Working Party on Climate Change and inland fisheries and aquaculture Convenor: No Convenor identified

After some discussion, the ExCom decided that this WP should be placed under Sub-Com III. The ExCom welcomed the literature review on climate change in inland fisheries, which

serves as a gap analysis, being carried out by HIFI. It agreed that the assessment of the feasibility of the WP can only be assessed once the review of the potential impacts of climate change on inland fisheries and aquaculture has been carried out¹.

Action: G. Castelnaud / U. Barg

5.5.3 Liaison Group on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management

Liaison person: I. Cowx

The ExCom thanked I. Cowx for his report. It was noted that this LG had no Terms of Reference. As there were already too many WPs and LGs, and not enough active people to contribute to their work, the ExCom decided to recommend to the 26th Session that this LG be discontinued and the issue monitored and reported by the Vice-Chairs under “Emerging issues”.

Action: P. Hickley / Secretariat

6. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF EIFAC AND THE FUTURE OF EIFAC

The Chairperson of EIFAC gave a brief report on the expert workshop on “Strengthening the role and functioning of EIFAC” that was held in The Hague, Netherlands, 30-31 March 2009, with the assistance of a consultant. The workshop participants were the Chairperson of EIFAC, two Sub-Commission chairpersons and the National Correspondents of five member countries as well as the EIFAC Secretary and the Technical Secretary of Sub-Commission IV. The workshop participants identified strategic orientation options, associated objectives and possible action plans. The workshop was felt to be a very good start into the restructuring process that EIFAC is undertaking to become more efficient. The main issues considered by the workshop were:

- The structure that EIFAC could/should have
- Increase of stakeholder participation in EIFAC
- Improved promotion of EIFAC’s capacity to deliver policy advice to its members (including the EC), and deliver through a more rapid process
- The need for organizing EIFAC’s work in a more efficient way, e.g. through a “project approach”
- Making EIFAC more powerful so that members (Governments and the EC) will actually seek and follow its advice
- Increase commitment to EIFAC by EIFAC member countries (through increased/improved in-kind and financial contributions).

A key conclusion of the workshop in the Hague was that the EIFAC National Correspondents have to play a much stronger role, and have to be better involved in EIFAC activities. The Workshop therefore recommended to invite the National Correspondents to a workshop where the different options for improving the functioning of EIFAC will be presented and discussed, including a stronger involvement of the National Correspondents. The Chair had

¹ FAO Fisheries has produced relevant materials which could be useful:

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/13788/en>

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/015/k3983e.pdf>

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/i0203e/i0203e00.pdf>

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/013/ai787e.pdf>

ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/brochure/climate_change/policy_brief.pdf

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0250e/i0250e02.pdf>

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/Y5028E/Y5028E00.HTM>

thanked the Consultant, Mr. van Gils, for the work done. It was agreed that the Chair and the Secretary of EIFAC prepare a short summary of salient points made by the Hague workshop.

The Executive Committee discussed the question whether or not there was still a need for EIFAC. After some very intensive discussions, the ExCom expressed the view that there was still a need for EIFAC as EIFAC was the only intergovernmental structure in Europe to deal with inland water fisheries and aquaculture. It was recognized that EIFAC was a Regional Fishery Body with high scientific potential, which is also reflected in the series of symposia held over the last two decades, and in the many useful Guidelines produced. It was decided that, in preparation for the Mainz workshop, the Second Vice-Chair would compile a list of good arguments to support the continuation of EIFAC. It would also be good if the countries themselves could provide indicators for “why” EIFAC is still needed.

The Executive Committee recognized again that EIFAC did not have financial capacity for carrying out activities, and that it needed to engage with funding mechanisms. It was, however, also noted that EIFAC could possibly form a “consortium” to apply for funding.

The Executive Committee discussed the structure of EIFAC. The Committee noted that there are currently twenty Working Groups within EIFAC, some of which do not function properly. The Executive Committee agreed that it was necessary to review the structure of EIFAC to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. It might be beneficial if the structure of the Commission changes, i.e. away from the Sub-Commission and Working Party structure, applying instead a “project approach”. The Executive Committee discussed the possibility to set up a “Scientific committee”. It was noted that changes to the structure of the Commission would need to be reflected in the “Rules and procedures” of EIFAC and that those would therefore have to be modified.

The preparation of an “Option paper” was discussed as it was felt that it was not appropriate to just suggest to the countries that EIFAC should be changed into an Article 14 body (with full country responsibility for the budget). The Executive Committee finally agreed to have an “Option paper” prepared by a consultant who is an expert in international and regional fishery governance to prepare a paper proposing alternatives for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission. The Executive Committee identified Ms Judith Swan as a potential consultant. Ms Swan was approached and agreed to prepare the “Option paper” and present it at the workshop to be organized for the EIFAC National Correspondents on 28-29 January in Mainz, Germany, and to the 26th Session of EIFAC, 17-20 May 2010 in Zagreb, Croatia. Mr. N. Gueye, Chief FIEL, confirmed that funding is available from FIEL to hire Ms. Swan. The TORs of Ms Swan are reproduced in Annex 2.

A roadmap and timetable was agreed (see Annex 3).

Action: P. Hickley / Secretariat

7. EMERGING ISSUES

As they have been largely dealt with under the Sub-Commissions, there were no points to be addressed here.

8. ANY OTHER MATTERS

It was reported that some delay was experienced with the preparation of the country reports but work was in progress as requested.

It was noted that Mr. Oyvind Walso represented EIFAC at the NASCO meeting for which he was thanked.

9. CLOSING OF THE SESSION

In closing the meeting on 20 May, Mr. Hickley thanked all participants.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Judith Swan

(23 November 2009 – 5 March 2010; to be extended in early 2010 through May 2010 to cover also Ms Swan's participation at the 26th Session)

1. Under the overall guidance of the Director, FIE, and the direct supervision of the Secretary of EIFAC, as well as in close collaboration with the EIFAC Executive Committee members, the Chairpersons of the EIFAC Sub-Commissions and the EIFAC Secretariat, and other FAO staff as appropriate, the consultant will carry out the following tasks.
 - a. Prepare an “options paper” that proposes, for the review by the 26th Session of EIFAC in May 2010, possible alternatives that would lead to an improved efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission. This option paper will first be presented to EIFAC National Correspondents who will attend a Workshop in January 2010 aiming at reemphasizing the importance of the process under way, raising their awareness about the critical need to discuss the options paper with the relevant decision makers in the Ministry back home responsible for inland fisheries and aquaculture, and briefing them about the critical importance that a high-level delegation (able to take decisions with regard to EIFAC's future) attends the 26th Session
 - b. The “options paper” will contain background information on EIFAC and relevant developments at international level with respect to the role of RFBs. It will describe the legal, structural, financial and administrative implications as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each of the following options:
 - EIFAC should continue as a Regional Fisheries Body under Article VI of the FAO Constitution but with an improved structure and improved “Rules of Procedures” taking into account a “0”-growth budget scenario (compared to present status)
 - EIFAC should be converted into a Regional Fisheries Body under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution with a “0”-growth budget scenario (compared to present status)
 - EIFAC should be converted into a Regional Fisheries Body under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution with an independent budget provided by the members of EIFAC for the staffing (minimum one full-time Executive Secretary, one Technical Assistant and one person for secretarial support) and for operating
 - EIFAC should be converted into an Independent Intergovernmental Organization with an independent budget
 - EIFAC should be converted into a Regional Fisheries Body under Article XV of the FAO Constitution
 - EIFAC should be abolished because the countries do not see a need any longer to maintain it because of marginal benefit to the countries

c. Before and during preparing the “options paper”, the consultant will review relevant documents provided and hold consultations with FIEL, the EIFAC Executive Committee, the EIFAC Secretariat and the FAO Legal Office (as well as other relevant persons outside FAO if and when needed)

d. The Consultant will attend the above-mentioned Workshop in Mainz, Germany from 28-29 January 2010 as a resource person to present the “options paper” (that will be sent to the Workshop participants at the latest one week before the Workshop).

Roadmap and timetable

Action	by whom	by when
Draft and finalize the TORs for Ms Judith Swan to produce "Option paper"	EIFAC Secretariat in cooperation with FIEL	as soon as possible
Bullet points "Need for EIFAC"	Second Vice-Chair of EIFAC	by 27 May
Consolidation of "Need for EIFAC", taking into account the bullet points sent by Second Vice-Chair of EIFAC, the content of the letter to NASCO as well as the justification used to convince UK Government to pay for hosting the Windermere Session	Chair of EIFAC	by 3 June
Communicate informally the indicative Session dates to EIFAC National Correspondents; mention that dates will be confirmed officially and an official invitation will be sent	EIFAC Secretariat	by 4 June
Explanation of the purpose of the Workshop for EIFAC National Correspondents and invitation to the EIFAC National Correspondents to attend the WS. Urge for participation. a) Letter to be sent specifically to the EIFAC National Correspondents. b) If EIFAC National Correspondents can not attend, then EIFAC National Correspondent should identify a person to attend in her/his place. c) If no reply can be obtained from the EIFAC National Correspondent even after several trials, EIFAC Secretariat/Chair of EIFAC contact the relevant Ministry directly with the request to nominate a person to attend the WS. Copy Permanent Representatives of the countries to FAO on the correspondence with for EIFAC National Correspondents	Chair of EIFAC in coordination and cooperation with EIFAC Secretariat and FIEL	by mid-June, and following months for reminders and re b) and c)

Short summary of salient points made by the Hague WS	EIFAC Secretary and Chair of EIFAC, with input from Technical Secretary Sub-Com IV, and with Vice-Chairs as peer reviewers	by mid-August
Official invitation for the 26th Session to be sent by FAO		after mid-September
"Chase-up" letter to the EIFAC National Correspondents by the Chair of EIFAC	by Chair of EIFAC	one week after the official invitation was sent
Delivery of the draft "Option paper" to the EIFAC Secretariat for onforwarding to ExCom members	Judith Swan	by mid-December
Response from ExCom to EIFAC Secretariat	Chair of EIFAC and ExCom	by 5 January 2010
Scrutinize comments from ExCom and finalize "Option paper"; clearance by FIEL and/or DSSM	Judith Swan in cooperation with Secretariat and FIEL	by 11 January 2010
1,5 days Workshop for EIFAC National Correspondents; starting on first day at 12:00 or 13:00	EIFAC Secretariat, Judith Swan, Chair of EIFAC, ExCom members	during 3rd week of January 2010
Session documents distributed	EIFAC Secretariat and FIEL	by 16 March