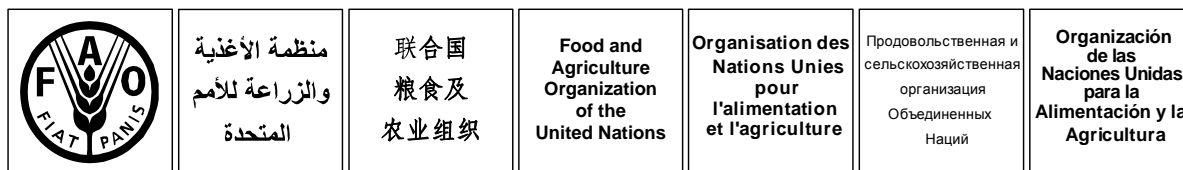


August 2012



European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission

Twenty-seventh Session
Hämeenlinna, Finland, 24–26 October 2012
EIFAAC Strategy Plan for 2012–2016

Version 23 July 2012

The EIFAAC Strategy Plan addresses the following areas:

1. Introduction
2. Stakeholders
3. Mission Statement
4. Objectives, Goals and Initiatives
5. Priority issues

1. Introduction

The European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC) was established in 1957 by the FAO Council under Article VI-1 of FAO Constitution and held its first session in 1960 in Dublin, Ireland.

Over the past two decades, EIFAC Members have consistently addressed the need to reform the Commission. They felt that it was time to carry out an in-depth review of the Commission's functions and means for action. The EIFAC reform process started at the Seventeenth Session in 1992. However, from 1992 to 2007 the issue of restructuring and strengthening EIFAC was addressed only briefly. The Twenty Fifth Session of EIFAC, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 21 to 28 May 2008, had finally agreed to change the name of EIFAC, introducing aquaculture in order to recognize the importance of aquaculture to the countries in Europe and to properly reflect the activities of EIFAC, and decided to approve the revised name of the Commission, whereby the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC) is now called European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC). Furthermore, the Session agreed that a process be initiated to review the possibilities for improvement of EIFAC. As a first step, a workshop was held in The Hague (The Netherlands) in March 2009, which made proposals for strategic orientations options, associated objectives and possible action plans. The workshop ideas and expectations were considered in an

options paper as a basis for decision. Then the country delegates were invited to a second workshop in Mainz (Germany) in January 2010 to discuss the various options proposed.

The breakthrough could be achieved at the Twenty-sixth Session of EIFAC held in May 2010 in Zagreb where the Commission agreed to restructure EIFAC to a project-based organization while abolishing all Sub-Commissions and Working Parties with the aim to make the Commission's work more efficient. The Twenty-sixth Session also agreed to modernized Statutes, mission statement and objectives. The functioning of the Commission has further strengthened by setting up a Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC). A Management Committee (MC) replaces the former Executive Committee. The Management Committee has to implement the decisions of the Commission and coordinate and monitor the work of the TSC. The Technical Scientific Committee main functions are the recommendation, evaluation and monitoring of programmes or projects. All former Working Parties were scrutinized by the MC and those that performed well were converted into projects.

The change of name and revised Statutes of EIFAAC were approved by the FAO Council at its Hundred and Fortieth Session on 3 December 2010 through Resolution No 3/140 under Article VI paragraph 1 of the FAO Constitution. The new Rules of Procedure were adopted at the Special Session on 27 October 2011 in Rome. These Rules specify that a Strategy Plan should be elaborated for approval by the Session. The Strategy Plan is a recommendation with main achievable goals and covers the duties for the time period 2012–2016.

2. Stakeholders

Members: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.

EIFAAC Stakeholders further include:

- other international fishery organizations (e.g. NASCO, GFCM, FAO Regional Fishery Bodies)
- political, management and research institutions,
- NGOs as observers
- Inland fisheries (commercial and recreational), aquaculture and environmental organizations (national and international) in Europe.

3. Mission Statement¹

The mission of EIFAAC is to promote the long-term sustainable development, utilization, conservation, restoration and responsible management of European inland fisheries and aquaculture, consistent with the objectives and principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other relevant international instruments, and to support sustainable economic, social, and recreational activities towards these goals through:

- providing advice, information and coordination;
- encouraging enhanced stakeholder participation and communication; and
- the delivery of effective research.

¹ As decided at the Session 2010 in Zagreb

4. Objectives, Goals and initiatives

The objectives of EIFAAC are:

- promote the sustainable development, utilization, conservation, management, protection and restoration of European inland fisheries and aquaculture resources based on the best available scientific advice and the application of an ecosystem approach, the precautionary approach and the need to safeguard biodiversity;
- identify and address strategic issues for European inland fisheries and aquaculture and provide advice and recommendations on future policies, measures and related actions needed to address the issues in a rapid and accountable manner as requested by Members;
- provide advice to managers/decision makers of inland fisheries and aquaculture as requested based on scientific, social, economic, legal and other factors; and
- serve as a forward-looking international platform for the collation, validation, dissemination and consideration of information on common challenges and opportunities to European inland fisheries and aquaculture, and to this end, inter alia, proactively identify:
 - relevant scientific, social, economic, legal, statistical and other information and make recommendations for decision makers taking into account the need to protect and preserve the aquatic ecosystems; and
 - common problems and solutions, and harmonized approaches as appropriate.

The goals of EIFAAC are:

Goal 1: Continue to develop EIFAAC as the leading pan-European Organisation in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe.

Initiatives:

- Initiate or enhance formalized collaboration with other organizations (e.g. EU, GFCM)
- Build stronger partnerships with fisheries-related institutions and stakeholders
- Maintain and improve the release of EIFAAC advice and Technical Papers
- Alert, inform and gather specialists on inland fisheries and aquaculture from all over Europe
- Develop new, and improve existing, communication facilities

Goal 2: To implement processes and procedures to provide advice through projects and networks in accordance with the requirements of the Members.

Initiatives:

- Identify a priorities list of projects, convenors and team members
- Transfer the current prioritised working groups into successful projects
- Support the EIFAAC National Focal Points in the development of a network of experts and stakeholders to assist EIFAAC's specific projects
- Enhance the communication and the participation of the Focal Points in the decision-making process
- Inform and advice policy-makers
- Seek funding for the realization of the projects

Goal 3: Development of an international network of organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations that have an interest in inland fisheries and aquaculture to promote EIFAACs objectives in coordination with these bodies.

Initiatives:

- Identify organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations which have an interest in inland fisheries and aquaculture and catalog their aims and objectives, points of contact and their relevance for EIFAAC.
- EIFAAC will brief these organization on the Role of EIFAAC as an FAO regional fisheries organization and the rational for potential cooperation
- EIFAAC will develop a system of communication with these organizations.

Goal 4: Implement EIFAAC structures, process and procedures, in coordination with the FAO secretariat, to ensure efficient delivery for the Members objectives in accordance with best international practice.

Initiatives:

- Engage and motivate all EIFAAC stakeholders and familiarize them with the New EIFAAC
- Inform and convince the Members of the need for financial and human resource (e.g. secretarial, scientific, engineering) support for EIFAAC
- Monitor and seek to improve the performance of EIFAAC structures, process and procedures
- Efficiently administrate and coordinate the EIFAAC business in close cooperation with the National Focal Points

5. Priority issues identified by the Members

Members have expressed a strong desire for EIFAAC to focus more on the following issues which should be incorporated in existing projects (see Goal 2) or should give rise for new projects.

The importance of each issue is indicated by brackets after each priority. H = high; M = medium; and L = low.

I. Management-related issues and principles for inland fisheries and aquaculture

These issues are described as “management-related”, acknowledging that EIFAAC does not have a management mandate but may provide management advice to the members. Many suggestions focused on advancing modern management principles such as sustainability and biodiversity and ecosystem management, and included providing assessments and advice. (M)

II. Interactions and avoidance or resolution of conflicts in inland fisheries and aquaculture

The interactions within inland fisheries and aquaculture, and between inland fisheries and aquaculture and other sectors were approached from different perspectives. These included recognition of the need to identify and evaluate the interactions, and where there is potential conflict developing good management or other practices. (L)

III. Harmonization of cross-border and cross-sectoral governance and legal aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture

The harmonization of governance and legal aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture figured prominently in the responses. They suggested a number of cross-border and cross-sectoral considerations. (L)

IV. Protection and restoration of the environment and species

Protection and restoration of the habitat environment and certain species was a strong theme throughout many of the responses. A number of specific suggestions were made in this regard. (H)

V. Trade and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture

Although EIFAAC is not an organization focused on trade, some Members suggested that its priorities could include playing a supportive role in issues relating to trade and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture. (M)

VI. Development of databases on inland fisheries and aquaculture

The development of new databases was encouraged by Members as a priority activity, and suggestions were made on the type of information that could be maintained. (H)

VII. Climate change

Assessing and preparing for the impact of climate change on inland fisheries and aquaculture was considered by some Members to be a necessary and proactive priority. (M)

ANNEX

CATEGORIES OF PRIORITY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

I. Management-related issues and principles for inland fisheries and aquaculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to a management plan for Europe on piscivorous predators, especially cormorants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening management plans, identify scenarios and methods for sustainable inland fisheries and aquaculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish stocking, including general principles, best practices, economic aspects, interaction with natural stocks and safeguarding biodiversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating a wider introduction of principles of sustainable management and rational development in all freshwater fishing activities and aquaculture, including biodiversity issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem approach: the impact of inland fisheries and aquaculture on the ecosystem; estimation of the fish and fisheries component
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic aquaculture: substitution of fish based protein
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernization of farming facilities (implementation of new technologies, recirculation systems, hatcheries, diversification, modernization of processing and enabling its expansion on new subjects), equipment, tools and infrastructure (maintaining of channels, fish ponds, hydrotechnical facilities and roads in property of the State)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately address the issues of importance of fish ponds in terms of nature and biodiversity protection (fisheries as bird habitat, ichthyophag bird habitat, as well as habitat for other biological communities that harm the production). This issue links in particular with the necessity to adequately address the issue of piscivorous birds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through conversion and reorganization conceive, modernise and maintain the existent aquaculture resources (alternative form of exploitation-cultivating fish for restocking of fishing areas, small family hatcheries etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of alternative energy resources in closed aquaculture systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish farming in ponds and in special aquaculture systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new and updating existing codes of practices on different topics, e.g. fish genetics and biodiversity in inland fish stock preservation and enhancement, fish stocking, fish farming for stocking purposes and inland fish stock management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential role of inland fisheries and aquaculture in the protection of aquatic resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation, sustaining and strengthening professional inland fisheries, noting impacts of environmental and socio-economic constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of applicable management principles and legal implications in private and public waters for recreational and commercial fisheries to facilitate better use of the resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuation of the ecosystem services provided by the traditional fish-breeding and those related to managing the inland surface water ecosystems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversification of inland aquaculture production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of fish farmers and fisherman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation and management of species of “conservation” interest as defined by the Habitat Directive

II. Interactions and avoidance or resolution of conflicts in inland fisheries and aquaculture

- Interactions between: inland fisheries and aquaculture; recreational fishing and tourism; fisheries and other users of inland waters, including territorial and spatial planning issues; and between fisheries/aquaculture and other interest issues/groups
- The role of inland fisheries and aquaculture within rural development
- Competitive management issues between recreational and commercial fisheries
- Recovery of local and traditional knowledge to improve interactions between fisheries and other users of the aquatic environment
- Competition for the water
- Land use management, particularly the problem of sedimentation and the development of a standard for sediment for fresh waters

III. Harmonization of cross-border and cross-sectoral governance and legal aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture

- Cross-sectoral approach to the development of a legal framework, including interactions between inland fisheries and aquaculture and relevant European Union (EU) Directives, including the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive
- Fish migration, coordinated automatic monitoring of fish migration, dismantling of barriers (and new methods and practices for barriers)
- Flow management problems with minimum flow requirements and aquaculture
- Development and strengthening of integrated methods for monitoring, control and surveillance of fish and aquatic organisms (e.g. water inspection, fisheries inspection and nature protection)
- Harmonization of the legal framework in freshwater aquaculture, especially standards and practices for
 - health issues (water usage fees, concession mechanisms, food safety, and hygiene)
 - environmental licensing
 - predator control
- Harmonization or coordination of management, including on transboundary rivers and compliance with the European Eel Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 (establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel)
- Implementation of relevant international agreements and guidelines
- Adjustment of the legal framework towards priority goals
- Public participation
- An analysis of social, environmental and economic factors to sharpen policy making

IV. Protection and restoration of the environment and species
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening activities in relation to certain species including eels, crayfish, invasive, exotic and alien/non-native species, aquatic species protected by the Habitats Directive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat protection and restoration and prevention of contamination of habitat and species, including animal welfare, biological invasions and sewage treatment plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and use of agents against fish diseases with focus on maximum environmental protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and avoidance of environmental poisons and contaminants and chemicals in water and in fish
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of hydroelectricity on fisheries and best practices for screening, passage estimates of turbine mortality; developing a guide to reduce the conflict between hydroelectric development and protection and restoration of fishes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling inland fisheries to become a global indicator of the ecological state of socio-hydrosystems by evaluating the capacity of the fishers to address sustainable development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study at European level to explore the costs for the implementation of environmental measures to the aquaculture producers and the differences among Member countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of new species and endangered fish species into aquaculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of environmental impact of inland aquaculture facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing rivers recovering from long-term degradation

V. Trade and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of economic, cultural and social values of inland fisheries and aquaculture; and transnational promotion of inland fisheries and aquaculture in Europe to increase the market knowledge of designated species at European level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The adaptation of freshwater aquaculture production to market requirements, in particular the development of new products (value adding), labelling, certification schemes, marketing strategies (niche-market or wide-consumer market) and promotional producer organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and economic surveys of recreational and commercial fisheries, including costs and benefits and an evaluation of gains and benefits from licensed angling activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase of added value in aquaculture (innovations, new products, diversification of the offer and services etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats to the future of commercial inland fisheries, and the economic consequences for different countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on the aquaculture development should be strictly associated with the veterinary issues and organization of the market in fishery products, taking into account the impact of angling

VI. Development of databases on inland fisheries and aquaculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger development of scientific studies and research, including harmonization of data gathering and introduction of comparable methods of fisheries-based and scientific-based data gathering methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop inland fisheries and aquaculture statistical digital databases and data collection methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop adequate manuals and procedures for data gathering as well as adequate monitoring and control measures, particularly relating to food safety, nature protection and market mechanisms, with a wider participation and stronger inclusion of scientific and research institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include socio-economic data into regular production data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new approaches in the measurement of the importance of inland fisheries, such as crayfish, which values production as a price per weight and takes into account the recreational, economic, social and cultural values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear and precise methodology for research on particular subjects/issues and for information exchange in this respect (at the scientific and administrative levels), as well as for the procedure of the obtained results presentation (reports, recommendations, advisory documents, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of inland stock assessment plan

VII. Climate change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The problems and challenges of climate change, and its impact on aquatic flora and fauna, including species distribution and influence on recreational and commercial fisheries, and mitigation strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing models for climate change and fisheries, including fish species distribution and an international genetic fish map
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of the potential impact of climate change on the inland fisheries and aquaculture sector