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Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Wierzba, Poland, 26 May – 2 June 2004

PROGRESS REPORT, SUB-COMMISSION IV

Chairperson: I.G. Cowx (UK)
Vice-Chairperson: R. Marini (Italy)
Rapporteur: M.J. Collares-Pereira (Portugal)
Technical Secretary: D. Greboval (FAO) until 1 February 2004,
 thereafter R. van Anrooy (FAO)

Activities and achievements of the Sub-Commission during the intersessional period are summarized as follows:

Ad Hoc Working Party on Recreational Fisheries

Convenor: Mr B. Breton

No report was received from the Chairperson about activities under this working party. No progress has been reported regarding the Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries, although several countries are developing national guidelines. However, a number of activities have been taking place involving EIFAC delegates.

The European Anglers Alliance (EAA) had a meeting with the European Parliament on 25 March 2004 to promote the importance of recreational fisheries in Europe and also called for a pan-European study on the economic value of recreational fisheries entitled RECFISH. The outcome of this meeting will be reported at the session if information becomes available. The RECFISH project was submitted as an expression of interest under the EU Framework 6 programme, but no indication of it being funded was found on the European Commission CORDIS web site. This study was based on the premise that fishing with rod and line for recreational purposes makes a huge economic contribution to European economies, and their rural economies in particular, but this has never been measured in a comprehensive way. The EAA has embarked on the study to demonstrate to European Institutions the huge economic value and social importance of recreational angling in all European countries. One

output of this study is an annual update of the number of recreational anglers. More information on this subject can be found on the EAA website¹.

A review of the economic value of recreational fisheries in Nordic countries was carried out between October 1999 and January 2000. The results of this study have now been published: Toivonen A.-L., Roth E., Navrud S., Gudbergsson G., Appelblad, H. Bengtsson B. & Tuunainen P. (2004). The economic value of recreational fisheries in Nordic countries. *Fisheries Management and Ecology* 11, 1-14. The paper represents an important contribution to the way forward for economic assessment of recreational fisheries and could be considered as a framework for similar studies in Europe and elsewhere.

The Chairperson of the Sub-Commission IV was invited to chair the session on Recreational Fisheries at the 3rd World Fisheries Congress, to be held in Vancouver, Canada, in May 2004. He will present a key note paper entitled: 'Recreational fisheries and conservation: an unexpected marriage or grounds for divorce', which attempts to reconcile the position of recreational fisheries in terms of ecosystem management. This concept is the subject of a paper developed by the Chairperson in conjunction with Dr Steve Cooke, University of British Columbia, Canada entitled:

Cooke S.J. & Cowx I.G. Contrasting recreational and commercial fishing: searching for common issues to promote unified conservation of fisheries resources. Submitted to *Aquatic Conservation*².

Ad hoc Working Party on Socio-Economic Aspects of Inland Fisheries

Convenor: Matti Sipponen

The terms of reference for the Working Party (WP) were established at the 22nd Session in Windermere (2002) to:

- gather and compile information of recreational fisheries: definition of recreational fishermen, estimated number of fishermen, basic methods used for estimates;
- monitor and gather key information on ongoing research related to socio-economic evaluation of inland fisheries;
- produce methodological guidelines for the undertaking of socio-economic surveys on recreational fisheries.

To produce a state-of-the-art report, a questionnaire was sent to all EIFAC member countries. The questionnaire included questions on the definition of recreational fishers, numbers of inland recreational fishers, on-going research and an assessment of the economic value of inland recreational fisheries. However, by the first deadline at the end of February 2004, the response rate was rather low. Further efforts will be taken to complete the database. A summary report will be delivered by 15 May 2004 for reporting at the 23 Session of EIFAC.

No further activity of this working party was reported.

Other activities

The Chairperson of the Sub-commission attended a workshop organised by the World Fish Centre in Penang, Malaysia in January 2004 on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management to present a keynote lecture on the issues relating to inland fisheries. This highlighted many of the limitations of this approach when applied to inland fisheries, but also indicated that inland fisheries are already catered for under the catchment management approaches developed in the 1990s. However, what was apparent

¹ <http://www.eaa-europe.org/2003/PFSocioEconomicValue/SocioEconomicValue-List-EN.htm>

² Copies of this article can be obtained from the Chairperson Mr. Ian Cowx, via e-mail: I.G.Cowx@hull.ac.uk

from the meeting was the lack of involvement of social scientists and economists and their fields of study in the formulation and implementation of catchment management plans and the ecosystem approach. It is recommended that Sub-commission IV promotes the integration of social and economic arguments into these approaches.

The same problem was also highlighted during two conferences on river fisheries, both attended by the Chairperson of the Sub-commission. These were Rehabilitation of Large Lowland Rivers in Wageningen, The Netherlands (September 2003) and the 2nd Large Rivers Symposium (LARS), Phnom Pehn, Cambodia (February 2003). The main conclusions from these meetings were summarised in the LARS output, viz. *Valuation of inland fisheries is generally inadequate. In efforts to provide better valuation of river fisheries, a wide range of approaches have been used, and it is important to appreciate that they can be applied to provide value estimates from a range of perspectives, for example conservation value and use value. Conventional economic approaches (e.g. contingent valuation) aim to provide detailed quantification using a cost-benefit framework, which may be insufficient for appropriate valuation of the role and function of rivers. . Socio-economic approaches and livelihood analysis can help to highlight and understand the complex contributions of fisheries to rural livelihoods. Better valuation of living river resources is essential to manage for sustainability, the equitable sharing of benefits and for proper placing of the fishery in the context of the many other uses of rivers.*

The issues raised in the meetings mentioned above are common to those in EIFAC, where few social scientists and economists participate in the activities. Efforts should be made to get workers in these fields involved in EIFAC activities and links should be forged with the European Associate of Fisheries Economists (EAFE) to promote this action. Opportunities in this or other directions will need further discussion during the 23rd session.