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Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Thirty-first Session

Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16-18 May 2018

**Report from the Outcome of the Debate of the 29th Session of the European
Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)**

Executive Summary

The European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) held its 29th session in Stare Jabłonki, Poland, from 6 to 8 September 2017. This document contains the text of the Final Report. The full report with annexes on the approved EIFAAC Work Programme for the intersessional period 2018-2019 can be found on the FAO EIFAAC Website (www.fao.org/3/a-bu269e.pdf).

The EIFAAC 29th session provided three recommendations to guide improvements in European inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture (para 33):

- request to the European Union consider, as a member of EIFAAC, the dissemination of information and advice through its Common Fisheries Policy Data Collection Framework (DCF) national correspondents and aquaculture contact points. This action would be to the benefit of EIFAAC and the sector;
- recommendation that Members provide coordinated support to an EIFAAC project to identify definitions and indicators on the social and economic valuation of inland fisheries and aquaculture for the region;
- acknowledgement that Climate Change is affecting fish, inland fisheries and aquaculture. Focused adaptation to Climate Change needs to begin immediately and there needs to be consideration of the impacts of Climate Change on the inland fisheries and aquaculture sector:
 - embedded in other environmental activities;
 - included in resource management policies;

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ERC31

- embedded in an evidence-based adaptive and predictive management framework including economic and social aspects.

Guidance sought from the Regional Conference

The Members are invited to review the report and:

- request EIFAAC to identify and discuss priorities of work for the region in its future sessions and issues to be brought to the attention of future sessions of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC).



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EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Twenty-ninth Session

Stare Jablonki, Poland, 6 – 8 September 2017

REPORT

I. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The twenty-ninth session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) was held in Stare Jablonki, Poland, 6-8 September 2017 with Mr Cathal Gallagher (Ireland) as Chair. The session was attended by representatives from Croatia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland. The list of participants is provided in Appendix 2.

2. The Chair opened the session, welcomed the audience and cordially thanked the representatives of the Government of Poland for hosting the session. He also introduced the new EIFAAC Secretary, Ms Victoria Chomo to the Commission. Then Mr Igor Wawrzyniak on behalf of the Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation and the government of Poland welcomed the Session.

3. A revision of the agenda and the addition of a new agenda item on Thursday morning was proposed by the Chair, namely an intervention of Germany to discuss hosting the 30th Session of EIFAAC. The Members agreed to move agenda item 4 to agenda item 5 to accommodate this intervention. The revised agenda as provided in Appendix 1 to this report was agreed. Although there was no quorum present in the session, the Commission decided to proceed with the approval of the report pending correspondence with other members.

II. EIFAAC WORKPLAN FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2015-2017

REPORT FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

4. The Chair provided a brief overview on the history and current status, goals and objectives of EIFAAC since its inception in 1957. Key points were the major restructuring completed at the 27th Session in which EIFAAC moved towards a more efficient project oriented structure. The Chair also outlined the high level objective of EIFAAC along with the current goals and initiatives. The Chair

introduced the membership of Management and Technical Scientific Committee and provided an overview of the structure of the organization.

5. The Chair confirmed the position of EIFAAC as the only platform for inland fisheries in Europe. The Chair went through the four Goals of EIFAAC, from the intersessional period 2015-2017 which are higher level goals in the work plan and where projects need to fit into these goals and deliver against the goals. He presented the management structure and reminded the Members that a new chair will be elected at this session. He pointed out the difficulties of identification and engagement of operational focal points. The Chair reviewed the project templates and asked the members how distribution of information among general public could be improved.

6. The Chair presented the FAO strategic objectives and regional initiatives and emphasized the importance of the Commission aligning its projects and activities with FAO objectives. He invited the Members to consider these global goals when developing the intersessional work plan 2017-2019. Following an intervention by a member, the importance of the 17 UN sustainable development goals, was agreed by the session.

7. The Chair informed the Commission on the necessity to update the strategic plan and work plan considering priority of member states as per the agenda and encouraged the members to give considerations to their priority issues.

8. The Chair delivered a report to the Commission on progress against the action items identified from the EIFAAC work plan 2015-2017. Some highlights included:

- SOFIA chapter in FAO publications and many scientific publications and involvement in symposia
- Increased engagement with many relevant organizations in inland fisheries and aquaculture
- Management of 11 projects during the intersessional period in line with new efficient structure and governance

9. The Chair identified continued difficulty of engagement with EIFAAC operational focal points, also identifying the actions taken to rectify this issue. The Chair requested members to consider how to address this issue in the new EIFAAC strategic plan and work plan 2017-2019.

10. During the discussion of the work plan the Chair pointed out some pending difficulties facing EIFAAC as an Article VI body of FAO and in response to previous questions by members, invited the Secretariat to discuss budget issues.

11. The Secretary explained the contribution of FAO EIFAAC in terms of staff resources (Secretariat, conference services, protocol, legal, IT and website support) and travel of Secretariat staff and highlighted that the mandate of FAO is to provide knowledge rather than funding. The Secretary confirmed the changes in the Secretariat during the intersessional period 2015-2017. She mentioned what UN FAO can provide for EIFAAC as an Article VI advisory body.

12. Upon completion of the discussion on the 2015-2017 Work Plan, the Chair outlined other work completed since the last session including: management committee meetings, interaction with EIFAAC operational focal points and establishment of new contacts with the EU. The Chair noted the negative impact from the changes in the secretariat in the intersessional period 2015-2017.

13. The Chair informed the Commission that the Management Committee has received good support from the new Secretariat and that FAO support is moving in a positive direction. Some members confirmed that there has been good support from the new Secretary. Members pointed out that EIFAAC members are willing to contribute to the indicators of the SDGs under the FAO, but they need guidance. He proposed that it is the role of FAO Secretariat to proactively help Members in this respect.

14. The Chair requested the members to provide any additional comments to this agenda item. It was proposed to have closer association with the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Sub Committee on Aquaculture, and requested further information on how this could be achieved. The Chair informed that the Commission continues to build on these relations with FAO. For example EIFAAC Chair travelled to the Informal Consultation in Budapest in May 2017. The Chair requested the Commission to consider inclusion of an action item to support the continued development of relationships with FAO and the European Commission, as part of the new Work Plan.

INTERVENTION BY WORLD AQUACULTURE SOCIETY

15. The Chair invited observer organization the World Aquaculture Society (WAS) to make an intervention. Mr Laszlo Varadi on behalf of WAS spoke on possible interactions of the two organizations, particularly in the area of inland aquaculture in the Central and Eastern European region, where he also mentioned the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE) as a potential partner. The Chair pointed out that the presence of WAS at the 29th session of EIFAAC was evidence of a willingness to cooperate and is in line with EIFAAC objectives to engage other organizations.

16. Members welcomed this new initiative to collaborate as a good sign and asked if WAS could assist in identifying operational focal points through their network of contacts in aquaculture related institutions. It was proposed to try a bottom-up approach to identify government Focal Points as the top down approach of official FAO channels has been less successful than anticipated.

17. The Chair thanked WAS for their attendance and look forward to having further engagement.

III. EIFAAC ACTIVITIES SINCE THE 28TH SESSION

REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

18. The Chair opened the floor for the Chair of the Technical and Scientific Committee, Mr Teppo Vehanen to present a summary of the activities and achievements of EIFAAC projects since the last session. Mr Vehanen informed the Session about the procedures of submitting new proposals for EIFAAC projects and the process of reporting on already existing ones. Currently there are eight ongoing projects, three of them are new ones. Three projects have been closed during the last period, one due to inactivity and two were finalized successfully. A new project proposal was also received: "Workshop on Citizen Science in fisheries" and accepted with comments. He also reminded EIFAAC members on the need of election of new members for the Technical and Scientific Committee.

STATUS OF PROJECTS

19. Mr Vehanen presented a report on meeting document EIFAAC/XXIX/2017/3 and went on to present the following details of four projects, namely:

- "Welfare of fisheries in aquaculture", manager: Mr Helmut Segner (Switzerland)
- "Development of a European standard for fish pass monitoring", managers: Ms Emma Washburn and Mr Jon Hateley (UK)
- "Joint EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working group on eels", manager: Mr Alan Walker (UK), EIFAAC representative (Ireland) Ms Ciara O'Leary
- "Fish passage best practices", manager: Mr Andreas Zitek (Austria)

20. Four other projects were also introduced by project managers, as follows:

- "Aquatic Invasive Species in Europe", presented by Ms Marina Piria (Croatia)
- "Development of eel stocks in Norway and Ireland", presented by Mr Russell Poole (Ireland)

- ”Developing Advice on Sustainable Management Actions on Cormorant Populations”, presented by Mr Petri Heinimaa (Finland).
- Symposium project “Adaptation of inland fisheries and aquaculture to climate change” was presented under agenda item 5; manager: Mr Piotr Parasiewicz (Poland). Detailed information on project development is described in meeting document EIFAAC/XXIX/2017/3.

IV. INTERVENTION BY GERMANY

21. The Chair gave the floor to Ms Ulrike Weniger, Saxon State Ministry for Environment and Agriculture, Germany who announced that the German government is pleased to host the 30th Session of EIFAAC in September 2019 in Dresden. Ms Weniger explained that Germany would like to propose the topics of certification, food security and traceability for inland fisheries and aquaculture for the Symposium.
22. Discussion centered on inclusion of other subject matters such as contaminants, microplastics, etc. and Germany will confirm the topic one year before the Session. Germany explained that the topic is in line with the strategic objectives of FAO and UN SDGs. Germany asked Members to contribute to the refinement of the proposed topic.
23. The Chair thanked Germany for hosting the Session and the Symposium and was encouraged by the support of the members and added that an early agreement of hosting the Symposium is a positive development for EIFAAC.

V. SHORT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EIFAAC SYMPOSIUM INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON “ADAPTION OF INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULURE TO CLIMATE CHANGE”

24. Mr Piotr Parasiewicz, gave a short report and recommendations from the EIFAAC international symposium on “Adaption of inland fisheries and aquaculture to climate change.” He informed the Session that the Symposium was very successful with positive feedback received from the 64 participants from 20 countries. Mr Parasiewicz briefed the session about the contents and final recommendations of the Symposium. The members agreed to include the Symposium report as Appendix 6.
25. The main Symposium recommendations are:
- Climate change is affecting fish, inland fisheries and aquaculture.
 - Focused adaptation to climate change needs to begin immediately. There needs to be:
 - embedded in other environmental activities,
 - included into resource management policies
 - embedded in evidence based adaptive and predictive management framework including economic and social aspect
 - establish cooperation and communication strategy
 - Resource long term assessment and impact and mitigation measures.
26. The Chair expressed his appreciation for all the efforts extended for a successful EIFAAC symposium. He congratulated participants for an excellent symposium and thanked the organizers for their patience during a period of change with EIFAAC Secretariat. The Chair thanked the host country Poland, S. Sakowicz Inland Fisheries Institute and Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation for their support.

27. The Session agreed to take the Symposium recommendation in relation to Climate Change a formal EIFAAC recommendation to EIFAAC member states.

VI-VII. EIFAAC WORK PLAN FOR THE NEXT INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2017-2019

MEANS OF DELIVERY OF EIFAAC OBJECTIVES

28. The Commission reviewed and revised the high level EIFAAC goals resulted the development of three new EIFAAC goals. Objectives of the Commission are the long term goals prepared in co-operation by the Management Committee (MC), Operational Focal Points and member countries and below goals approved at the 29th Session. Actions in the intersessional period work plans reflect to decisions of each Session on what should be achieved under these general objectives. EIFAAC will strive to achieve the following goals:

- As a leading Pan-European Organization, EIFAAC provides policy and management advice in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture consistent with the objectives and principles of the FAO (strategic objectives, regional initiatives, SDGs) and other relevant international instruments.
- EIFAAC delivers technical and managerial advice, information and coordination on matters related to Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture to its members and serves as an international network of organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations.
- EIFAAC via its structures, processes and procedures implements efficient delivery of its organizations and Members' objectives in accordance with FAO principles and best international practices.

29. The Chair presented information in the Working Document EIFAAC/XXIX/2017/4 and the Commission discussed EIFAAC objectives and developed a new strategy for EIFAAC 2017-2021 as well as EIFAAC priority areas (Appendix 4). The Chair explained FAO objectives and UN SDGs and the need to align EIFAAC with these global goals.

30. Following the above discussion the Commission went on to develop and revise a new EIFAAC Work Plan 2017-2019 (Appendix 5).

31. The Chair opened the floor for comments and proposals for the work plan activities and work, which was followed by discussions. The Commission agreed on the continuation of the ongoing EIFAAC projects. In addition, the following new topics were proposed by the session for consideration for inclusion in the EIFAAC work plan for the intersessional period:

- **Social and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture:** The session acknowledged that increased focus should be placed on the socio-economic aspects of fisheries and aquaculture. This also comprises of the socio-economic relations and impacts between recreational fisheries, aquaculture and the commercial inland fisheries sector. A number of members indicated that in their home research institutes a focus had been brought to this area by internal socio-economic specialists. It was also noted that FAO fisheries projects normally included the important socio-economic pillar. In general, the members recommended that consideration should be given to the development of a project focused on an integrated cooperation between fisheries biologists, economists and sociologists.
- **Citizens to support fisheries science:** The members were supportive of the use of citizen science to facilitate sampling for fisheries research, the benefits of which were highlighted through a number of papers presented at the symposium. The discussion also clarified the need to ensure sampling programmes are well defined and citizens involved well trained. The members recommended that EIFAAC investigate and document the benefits and limitations of inclusion of citizen science when applied to fisheries research. The session also recommended

the development of protocols and procedures to facilitate the efficient introduction of citizen science into applied fisheries research.

The Session also discussed the importance of riverine continuity. The Chair of TSC briefed the Commission on the on-going projects in this area and the Members were informed about a recent engagement with EU Horizon 2020 project on riverine continuity (AMBER). As the Members were satisfied with the level of on-going work in this area, it was decided not to include this as an additional item in the Work Plan.

32. The FAO SOs and RIs, as well as the UN SDGs provided insight and guidance in the development of the EIFAAC work plan for the intersessional period 2017-2019. The Commission, wherever possible, identified potential synergies from linking the work plan to the SOs, RIs and SDGs and incorporated this into the work plan. It was agreed by all that the impact of the work of the Commission and especially the availability of financial resources to carry out the projects will be greater if synergies can be identified between EIFAAC objectives and objectives of the other actors.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 29TH SESSION

33. The session decided that the following recommendations be considered by EIFAAC Members in the management of inland fisheries and aquaculture:

Recommendation: EIFAAC requests the EU considers, as a member of EIFAAC, the dissemination of EIFAAC information and advice through its Common Fisheries Policy Data Collection Framework (DCF) national correspondents and aquaculture contact points. This action would be to the benefit of EIFAAC and the sector.

Recommendation: EIFAAC recommends that Members should coordinate to support an EIFAAC project to identify definitions and indicators on the social and economic valuation of inland fisheries and aquaculture for the region

Recommendation: EIFAAC acknowledges that Climate Change is affecting fish, inland fisheries and aquaculture. Focused adaptation to Climate Change needs to begin immediately and there needs to be consideration of impacts of Climate Change on the inland fisheries and aquaculture sector:

- embedded in other environmental activities,
- included into resource management policies
- embedded in evidence based adaptive and predictive management framework including economic and social aspect
- establish cooperation and communication strategy

Resources are required to support long term assessment, impact and mitigation measures.

VIII. ANY OTHER MATTERS

34. There were none.

IX. ELECTION OF THE EIFAAC OFFICERS

35. Although there was no quorum present in the session, the Commission decided to proceed with the election of the EIFAAC MC and TSC.

36. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF MC

- Chair – Petri Heinimaa (FINLAND)
- 1st Vice Chair – Reinhold Hanel (GERMANY)
- 2nd Vice Chair – Igor Wawrzyniak (POLAND)

37. ELECTION OF THE MEMBER OF THE MC

- Béla Urbányi (HUNGARY)
- Guðni Magnús Eiriksson (ICELAND)
- Cathal Gallagher (IRELAND)

38. ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE TSC

- Marina Piria (CROATIA)
- Piotr Parasiewicz (POLAND)
- Colin Bean (UNITED KINGDOM)
- Christian Skov (DENMARK)
- Robert Arlinghaus (GERMANY)
- Fiona Kelly (IRELAND)

Alternates:

- Andreas Melcher (AUSTRIA)
- Jan Kubečka (CZECH REPUBLIC)
- Russell Poole (IRELAND)
- Andrzej Kapusta (POLAND)

39. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE TSC

- Teppo Vehanen (FINLAND)

X. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

40. This was discussed under agenda item 4.

XI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSING OF THE SESSION

41. The report was approved by the Members present at the 29th Session. The Chair thanked the MC and the members for their support. He thanked the TSC for all their work. The newly appointed Chair made a few comments to the members and thanked the members for his nomination.