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منظمة  
الغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

# COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

### AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### First Session

Rome, 20–22 June 2016

### SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES ADVISORY WORKING GROUP ON AQUATIC GENETIC RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGIES

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), at its last session, requested its Secretary to ensure complementarity between the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the Commission, especially with regard to aquatic genetic resources.<sup>1</sup> It also reiterated the importance of inviting the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies, when convened, to contribute to the preparation of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and requested to be informed, through its Bureau, about the contributions of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies.

2. This document summarizes the results of the first session of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies, which was held on 1 to 2 October 2015 in Brasilia, Brazil. The full report is available as document CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.3.

## BACKGROUND

3. The relevance of the sustainable use, management and conservation of aquatic genetic resources (AqGR) for food and agriculture is relatively well known and documented, but there is still an urgent need to preserve and better manage existing aquatic diversity to enhance its contribution to food security, nutrition and livelihoods. Aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture include thousands of species, which are found in the world's oceans, seas, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, rice paddies and other wetlands, and also in aquaculture facilities in marine, brackish and fresh waters. Unlike other sectors, all wild relatives of farmed aquatic species still exist in the wild.

4. The establishment of the Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies (Advisory Working Group) and its terms of reference were approved at the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2014, based on a request from the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, and in recognition of the opportunities to increase food production and improve livelihoods from the responsible use, management and conservation of aquatic genetic resources and technologies. The Terms of Reference are contained in Annex 3 to the *Report of the First Session of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies*<sup>2</sup>.

5. The establishment of the Advisory Working Group will assist and provide advice to FAO on matters concerning aquatic genetic resources and technologies, and will enhance international cooperation on aquatic genetic resource management. Following FAO standard procedures for the establishment of the Working Group, ten experts were endorsed taking into consideration technical expertise, and gender and geographical balance. These members will serve a two-year term with the possibility of renewal. The list of participants of the first session is contained in Annex 2 to the *Report of the First Session of the COFI Advisory Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources and Technologies*.

6. The Advisory Working Group developed a general work plan which includes the following activities: (1) Establishment of a web page devoted to aquatic genetic resources and technologies under the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture web site; (2) Assistance with producing the State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; (3) Assistance with the FAO symposium on "Biotechnologies for aquatic genetic resources in light of food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable resource use"; (4) Revision of definitions related to genetic resources in FAO glossaries; (5) Compilation of a list of the best existing guidelines and published material on

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<sup>1</sup> CGRFA-15/15/Report, paragraph 64.

<sup>2</sup> CGRFA/WG-AqGR-1/16/Inf.3

management and transfer of AqGR; and (6) Development of a roadmap for countries on minimum requirements for sustainable management, development, conservation and use of aquatic genetic resources.

### **TENTATIVE WORK PLAN**

7. A tentative work plan proposed by the Advisory Working Group is provided below:
- Approval of the Working Group members.
  - First meeting (Brazil, October 2015).
  - Biography of Working Group members submitted.
  - Shared directory established.
  - List of relevant links and publications submitted.
  - Web page established.
  - Terms of Reference for the Thematic Background Papers reviewed.
  - Technical assistance on the national reports provided.
  - Advice on the analysis of country reports provided.
  - Definitions on AqGR in FAO glossaries reviewed and improvements proposed.
  - Draft SoW AqGR reviewed.
  - Draft road map developed.
  - Road map refined.
  - Promotion of SoW AqGR enhanced.
  - Linkages with the ITWG AqGR established.
  - Intersessional meeting (Video conference, depending on funds) held.
  - Work plan revised (based on available resources).
  - Second meeting (tentatively in I.R. of Iran, October 2017).

### **GUIDANCE SOUGHT**

8. The Working Group may wish to:
- Take note of and comment on the tentative work plan proposed by the Advisory Working Group; and
  - Recommend that the Commission reiterate its invitation to the Advisory Working Group to contribute to the preparation of *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*.